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John Wardie



THE
LETTERS
OF A
SOLITARY WANDERER:
CONTAINING
NARRATIVES
OF
VARIOUS DESCRIPTION.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

VOL. IV.

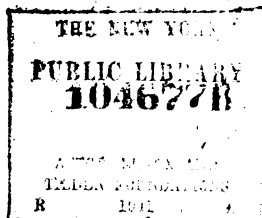
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LONDON:

Printed for T. N. LONGMAN and O. REES, Paternoster-row.

1802.

vsl



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Printers-Street,

P R E F A C E

TO THE FOURTH AND FIFTH VOLUMES OF

"The Letters of a Solitary Wanderer."

THE work, of which the fourth and fifth volumes are now published, was sold to Mr. *Sampson Low* more than three years since: and the first three books were published in *October*, 1800. A few months afterwards, Mr. *Low* died; and his executors thought it advisable to sell such part of his effects as consisted of copy-right, by auction. Among the property thus disposed of was the remainder of the impression of three volumes of the "*Letters of a Solitary Wanderer*," and his purchase of two manuscript volumes, for which I had been paid. It happened, that of

these five volumes of the same work, the three volumes already published were bought by Messrs. *Crosby* and *Letterman*; and the two others by Messrs. *Longman* and *Rees*. This occasions the book to appear under very awkward circumstances; and has prevented my concluding it, at least at present, according to my original agreement with Mr. *Low*, which was, to furnish him with six volumes. The conclusion of the work must now depend on my health and leisure. Had the book been of another description, and contained only a single narrative, I must have completed it. As it is, the story of the *Solitary Wanderer* himself remains to be told; but the want of it does not affect any of the narratives except the last; and I have written much of it a second time, to disentangle it, as far as I could, from that which would have closed the work,

work, had it now been finished according to my first design, and with which I intended to connect it.

Since I have written for the press (now about thirteen years) I have very seldom had occasion to name the strictures which the monthly pamphlets, called *Reviews*, have passed on my writing. Far from complaining of them, I have sometimes thought that praise has been too indiscriminately bestowed; and where errors have been candidly pointed out, I have been grateful for the correction, and very sincerely endeavoured to take advantage of just and well-founded criticism.

But a style of animadversion has obtained within these last seven or eight years, subversive of all the purposes for which these pamphlets are professedly published. The gentlemen—or ladies—(for I believe novels are often left to the latter,) now

now very frequently transfer their remarks from the books they undertake to criticise, to the private history of the authors; they do not tell the public *why* the work they are reviewing is good or bad; but they take upon them to say how they suppose the writers have conducted themselves in domestic life, and how their writings are by those circumstances influenced; which is nothing to the purpose, and proves only that such *soi disant* critics are not qualified, either by liberality of mind, or literary knowledge, for the task they pretend to execute.

Among other invidious remarks of this kind it is observed, by one of these critics, that "Mrs. SMITH is too fond of representing the distresses of *middle-aged ladies*; and has given the same character, under different names, in almost all her novels."

I never

I never imagined, till I read this judicious criticism, that no interest could be excited but by love stories that relate to girls of fifteen: and as to the resemblance they thus pretend to find between certain characters in different books, as all alluding to one person, what right have they to say it? Surely no impartial reader will judge in this manner, or imagine I could be guilty of such foolish egotism as to represent myself under these different characters, and under circumstances which, in no single instance, bear any relation to my private life; except only that one of those characters suffers from the artifices of worthless men of a certain profession: to which profession, perhaps, the reviewers of this article might originally belong. I venture to assert that such reflections as these, have nothing to do with sound criticism; and

that to call them so is an insult to the feelings, as well as to the taste of the public.

The consequence of this abuse of the design of Reviews is, that these monthly oracles are, for the most part, considered as the mere vehicles of political animosity, written by the humblest retainers of party. And if in certain departments some learning and integrity are still found, others are filled by persons who have nothing but their malignity to supply the want of those qualifications, and who, neither by natural talent or acquired information, are adequate to the task of correcting the advertisements of a country newspaper.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

Feb. 1, 1802.

LETTERS, &c.

MANY weeks have elapsed, my dear Harry, since my last letter was written. Yet I doubt whether you have yet received it. I have since its date traversed a very great extent of country; much of it the same that we once passed together, when life was opening to my sanguine view, and presented scenes of ideal happiness never to be realized. I reserve for our conversation the remarks I made during my short stay at Paris; for even before I last took leave of you, you were not only satiated but fatigued by the various and contradictory accounts that had been published of the progress of the revolution and the state of France; and I

VOL. IV.

B

remember

remember we regretted together, that it was not always possible to find refuge in incredulity for our outraged feelings and baffled speculations; in incredulity, which sometimes we had indulged, from the certainty, that every circumstance in such an event would be by certain persons distorted and misrepresented, and some of whom I really believe would have been less pleased if they had found less ground for declamation against what no integrity of practice would have saved from their abhorrence of its principle.

Yet how shall I talk of my journey from Paris to Lille, and from thence, by the usual route, to the north of Germany; how shall I tell of the events of a single day, without bringing into my detail the horrors inflicted by the fiend of war; through the feat of his ravages I passed, and, though two years have since elapsed, his dreadful footsteps are still marked by desolation.

I remember when I was a boy, I might
almost

almost say an infant, for it is among my first recollections, an acquaintance of my father, an old Saxon gentleman, who with the garrulity of age, yet with animation seldom seen at that period of life, once related, in my presence, what he saw and suffered at Dresden in the year 1750, when the great Frederic of Prussia, made himself master of that unfortunate city. The Saxon described the fire and the carnage as it affected the generality of the inhabitants; then more minutely his own misfortunes. His wife was killed by the bursting of a bomb, just as she had delivered to him her infant daughter, and they were attempting to reach a quarter of the town, where they hoped to find more security. I had at that time very little idea of what was a cannon, and what was a bomb; yet when I saw the tears slowly steal down the withered cheeks of this respectable old man, and heard him describe how, lame and bleeding as he was, overcome with anguish both of the body

and the mind, he escaped, he knew not how, among the bodies of the dying and the dead, amid falling buildings, and fire which seemed to pursue him; while his little girl clung shrieking to his bosom, and called for her mother; the impression the story made upon me, time has never erased; and when I have lately seen vestiges of the same horrible scourge, that narrative has returned to my recollection, in as mournful colours as when it was first represented; a thousand, a million of equal or greater miseries, now inflicted on mankind, seem to throw a veil of darkness over the face of nature, and I shudder "at the madness of mankind."

One of the consequences of all that has happened, is, there is no longer any security in travelling; and I am not only obliged to shew my passport, and have it renewed at every considerable town, but am assured, that as I advance farther towards Vienna, and among the extensive forests of Germany, I shall incur the risk
of

of meeting with very disagreeable adventures. There are, I am told, deserters of all nations, or men driven to despair by the loss of their property, and the cruel change that they have experienced from affluence to penury ; who, after two or three campaigns, finding their expectations faded away, and their cause hopeless, have associated as free-booters, to prey and revenge themselves on a community, for which they have made so many sacrifices in vain. These bands of desperate and unhappy outcasts are described as being more ferocious than the Tartars of the desert ; and I am menaced with certain destruction if I put myself in their way—I shall venture it nevertheless ; having learned from long observation, that these terrific stories are almost always greatly exaggerated, and often entirely without foundation. I shall be robbed mightily quietly of the very little of any value that I shall have about me ; and I will not believe, that men, who though unfortunate

and misguided, are brave, will murder me in cold blood. Now, were you sitting by me I should listen with great deference, to a very just distinction between courage and rashness. But I would in return ask you, what would be your opinion of a man who should be deterred by such fears from a journey it was necessary for him to take? You will however say, it is *not* necessary for me to cross Germany at this time—not precisely necessary; but when once I desire to do a thing, and have found reasons why I ought to do it, I hate to turn aside for every objection that may be made, where my own safety is alone at stake, for which you know I am accountable to nobody; unfortunately for myself, I sometimes think, and yet I have seen many who envied me the solitary freedom I enjoy, by having no kindred; and I do very much fear, that if the true history of all the large families in England, or in any other country, could be known, many individuals would be found who had
reason

reason enough to envy me. How often do we see a lovely dejected girl of whom, when you enquire the cause that seems to have blighted her youth, you hear, "Oh, she is a very good girl, and would have married extremely well, but she has a brother who has ruined her by dissipating the fortune that was entrusted to his care, and has so disgraced his family, and no one is willing to form a connection with his sister, all-deserving as she is."

Sometimes, but less frequently, you see a brother shunning society and wasting his youth in anxiety for the errors or the sorrows of a sister. Parents are often driven to a premature grave by the loss, or what is more bitter, the ill conduct and ingratitude of the children, to raise whom the early part of their lives have been devoted; and children are as often sacrificed before they are capable of reasoning, to the convenience or ambition of their parents. But am I, shall I ever, be happy, or even content, thus "joyless, loveless,

unindeared?" Oh! no, never! I can parry now the sense of that dreary vacuity, which the most cruel disappointments have occasioned in my heart; but how shall I do when the hour comes, as come it may, that I shall be confined to a great chair, "sans eyes, sans taste, sans ears, sans every thing?" Perhaps, however, I may even then fare as well, as many good old fathers of families, who, in addition to personal infirmities, are fretting over the follies or drooping in silent despondence, at the neglect of their children—I am now travelling among the finest scenery on the banks of the Rhine; and though I have been, you know, the same road before, I am struck with bold features of a country so different from England. If however, the works of God affect me with awe, and make me feel my existence, I am mortified and humbled enough when I contemplate the devastations of the spoiler man, and see him busied only in works of destruction—

"Blood !

“ Blood ! blood ! blood !

“ Merciful heaven, nothing but blood.”

I see whole tribes, whole nations of human beings, who seem to have come into life for no other purpose, to have been reared and trained to no other end than to be cut off in the flower of their strength and youth, in attempting to destroy others ; victims like themselves of— what am I to call it ? But I ought not to forget, that, before I left England, who ever ventured to express an abhorrence of war, was called by very hard names ; and even their religious principles brought in question by those, whose profession it is to preach and promote peace. Strange that party should so pervert the understanding, and make men guilty of such absurdities ! To wish for peace, to desire that the waste of life may cease, and suffering humanity feel no longer the scourge of war, and its certain consequences, contagion and famine, is to be an Atheist, a Jacobin, I know not what !

B 5

Such

Such might surely be answered, as La Motte le Vayer answered an hypocrite, who reproached him with irreligion—
 “Mon ami j’ai tant de religion que je ne suis pas de ta religion *.”

This is a digression which might easily be accounted for by the *concatination* of ideas, so learnedly insisted upon by a certain female friend of ours; for I have so recently travelled through the fields of death, and seen depopulated villages, and a country not yet recovered from the scourge which has passed over it, that my soul recoils from the recollection, which however returns in despite of my desire to drive it from my mind, and mingles itself with my reflections, which way so ever I turn them.

“I will go sleep”—and to-morrow perhaps the sun may shine, a circumstance

* Ils ignorent, ces pauvres gens, que le vrai religion, la vrai piété, la vrai sagesse, est d’adorer Dieu comme le Pere commun de tous les hommes sans distinction, et d’être bienfaisant. (Voltaire.)

on

on which you have sometimes told me much of my good humour depended. It is true that I am, as Pope expresses himself, extremely *atmospherical*, and disposed to allow, that the world is rather more tolerable on a fine day than when the great luminary is concealed from our sight; but this is a mere physical affection. Alas! what can the sun now shew me that can give me pleasure, unless indeed it be a letter from you, to tell me you and the few friends I yet love and esteem in England, are well.

I am now proceeding towards Vienna in my usual idle way, staying sometimes two or three days in a place without any particular reason, but to wander round a country without much to recommend it but its novelty; or in consequence of meeting with some other wanderer, who has as little pleasant to do, and as much unpleasant to think of as I have.

I know not when I shall write to you again; perhaps not till I get to Vienna.

or Prague, or Buda. Nay, it is not impossible but that you may receive a missive from Constantinople, and that then I shall take a tour to the Archipelago, and send you an account of Greek beauties—*Que sçais je ?*

LETTER II.

WELL! I have now something to relate that may interest you. I despaired of meeting with much of novelty to write about, for you had seen German towns, and had been taught patience by German postillions, and murmured at German inns; and as to pictures and trinkets, I know you are better acquainted with the first than I am, and would not give a single shilling to have all the others that the most *tasteful* collections contain. Without farther preface I must call upon your imagination to assist me, or my descriptive powers will be severely taxed, in my woods and *windings*.

A mountainous country would look better on paper; plains are not half so well. One can neither wind up nor down precipices,

cipices, and there is not a rock to be had (just now I mean) under which banditti should lurk, or be expected to lurk. However, it unfortunately happens, that you know the country, and I love to adhere to truth, therefore I must content myself with varying my forests as well as I can; for I am going to tell you of what fell out in the woods and wastes of Westphalia. Listen!

Banditti, you know, I was taught to expect. "Well, my friends," thought I, as I sat silently in a strong travelling chaise I purchased of an Englishman at Brussels, and Arnold was fast asleep in the other corner. "Well, Messieurs, I am in search of something new; and it has so happened, that though I have travelled through most of the countries in Europe, at all hours, and almost in all modes, I never did chance to meet with any of your fraternity; I mean of those who openly attack the traveller's purse; for as to others of a different description, who under various pretences do
the

the same thing, yet are reckoned mighty good sort of people, I have no reason to complain of any want of experience as to *their* various extracting powers. And I protest, so much have I suffered from certain among these *bandit traveſti*, both in pence and patience, that I had much rather meet with a stout fellow who tells me his purpose in a manner more concise than courteous, and puts his life on the hazard."

Thus communing with myself, passed I on. It would have been lighter, as the hour did not exceed four in the evening, if the weather had not been gloomy, and the woods very thick; and we might have proceeded quicker, if the roads had not been execrable, and the postillion a German. Slowly, slowly, therefore, moved the vehicle; and I had settled the matter about the robbers of the forest, and was thinking of something else, when the clouds breaking away in the west, a bright gleam of the declining sun glanced among the oaks and firs, on the
side

side of the road; and I fancied I saw the glitter of a musket, or some kind of fire arms; but it disappeared, and I forgot in five minutes that I had seen or imagined it. The sun was sunk, and darkness was hastening to conceal the strong lines of the boles of trees, and the undulating flow of their boughs, when—I was roused from my reverie by the word, *alte!* and an undecipherable noise uttered by the driver; something between a scream and a halloo. He stopped, however; and I thought that my experience in the modes of thieves of the undisguised sort, was now likely to begin.

I saw three men well mounted; two were dressed in the grey Hussar uniform, with helmet caps, and immense whiskers, or mustachios. The third was in green, and seemed the principal; each had a short carbine slung in his belt, and each in his right hand grasped a sabre. The troop who captured the nephew of Gil Perez on his way to Salamanca, were not more formidable.

midable. One of these fierce fellows rode up to the door of my chaise, and desired me in German, not as I expected, to give them my money, but to tell them who I was, who I had with me, and from whence I came?

I answered them as well as I could in the same language, that though I did not very clearly comprehend by what right they questioned me, yet as it was never my way to make a mystery of a matter of no importance, they were to learn that I was an Englishman travelling for my amusement; that I came from Brussels, and was going to Vienna through Hanover, and was accompanied only by my servant; "and now Messieurs," added I, "if your curiosity is appeased, I should be glad to be allowed to proceed, for darkness in these roads is rather to be avoided." They spoke a moment to each other; and him among them who I took for the superior, for his face, figure, and air, gave him very much the look of a gentleman,

gentleman, laid his hand on the door of the chaise. "Excuse me, Sir," said he, "it is not mere curiosity that urges me to give you farther trouble; nor do I mean to doubt what you say—I am conscious how singular and impertinent my curiosity may appear, but give me leave to ask you if you have lately left England? If you are soon returning thither? "Truly, Sir," replied I, "these are interrogatories which I have not been much used to answer. However, I will satisfy you—I go to Vienna merely for change—I came from France whither an accident carried me, not at all with my own inclination."

We exchanged half a dozen sentences of this kind—I spoke familiarly to the young stranger, whose voice and manner appeared to me to be particularly interesting; at length, as if some thought had suddenly struck him, he asked me whether I would give him leave to wait on me at the inn where I should pass the night?

Though somewhat surprised at this request,

quest, I answered, that I should be glad to see him; for without being able to guess what my new acquaintance was, I thought it certain he was *not*, what I had on his first accosting me, imagined.

“Since you are so obliging, Sir,” said he, “as to grant a stranger this permission, a stranger too who must appear in no advantageous light, I must request you to allow me to be your escort through this pass, which is not just now very safe for travellers.” To this proposal I assented, assuring him, however, that, as I travelled with very little money, and had no personal fear, it was trouble I should be unwilling he should take on my account. He said something civil, and we proceeded together with great gravity.

Arnold, who is a very honest fellow, and by no means a coward, has been so much in habits of remaining a quiet spectator of every scene which his following me may lead him into, that he gave no other sign of having been awakened from
his

his nap than crying hem! hem! two or three times. On my saying, "Well, we have got a good guard however, through the rest of this dreary road," he ventured to remark, that such an address as this young man's, in such a place, was very extraordinary. "I am sure, Sir," said he, when all of a sudden as I was half asleep I heard them stop the postillion, and had a glimpse of them from the window riding up so sharp, I thought certainly these were some of the free-booters, that they told me so much of at the inn yonder. "And when you thought so, were you frightened, Arnold?"—"Frightened, Sir! No: I hope not much frightened; but I was thinking, that in such a terrible country as this, for to be sure, Sir, it is a very bad country, a man might stand a chance of being robbed and murdered, and nobody be able to give the least guess in the world what had become of him."

"But is the secrecy, all that made this kind of exit particularly disagreeable?"

able? As to being robbed and murdered, you know that may happen in our own dear country, if we should venture a little too late, or a little too early, over Finchley Common or Kingston Heath; and for my own part, Arnold, I see no great consolation that would accrue from imagining that paragraphs would be in the papers for a fortnight, and my friends go about to tell each other what a *shocking* thing had happened, and then go to the play or the card table, and think no more about it." "Ah! Sir, that may be very true perhaps," replied my man, "but surely one has *some* friends who would be really sorry; I am sure my poor old mother and my sister would be much more unhappy for me, if I was to die abroad than at home; and as for you, Sir"—"I have no mother, no sister, Arnold!" I felt at that moment, that I was a being of far less consequence than my servant, for *I* have none to lament me.

If

If when to-morrow's sun with upward ray
 Gilds the wide spreading oak, and burnish'd pine
 Destin'd to mingle here with foreign clay,
 Pale, cold, and still, should sleep this form of mine ;

The day-star with as lustrous warmth would glow,
 And thro' the ferny lairs, and forest shades
 With sweetest woodscents fraught, the air would blow,
 And timid wild deer, bound along the glades.

While in a few short months to clothe the mould,
 Would velvet moss, and purple* melic rise
 By Heaven's pure dew drops water'd, clear and cold,
 And birds innumerable sing my obsequies.

But in my native land, no faithful maid,
 To mourn for me, would pleasure's orgies shun ;
 No sister's love my long delay upbraid,
 No mother's anxious heart demand her son !

Thou, only thou, my friend, wouldst feel regret,
 My blighted hopes and early fate deplore,
 And while my faults thou'lt palliate or forget,
 Would half rejoice, I felt that fate no more !

Such were the sentiments that took this
 form in my mind, as I journeyed, now

* *Melica uniflora*. Wood melic grass.

darkling,

darkling, the remainder of my way. It was not far; for when we arrived at the lonely post-house of Erlenstob, which is in one of the wildest parts of this desolate country; my postillion informed me it was impossible for his horses to proceed any farther, and there were no horses there, or any expected till the next morning; an account that the landlord, who at first did not appear, at length was pleased to confirm. The young Huf-sar had arrived a few moments before me. He expressed great concern at my being thus compelled to wait in so disagreeable a place, adding, that he was rather surprised I had not provided against it. I assured him I had done whatever depended on me, but that the roads were unusually bad, and my conductor unusually slow; yet, that notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, I should have gone on, if post horses had been ready.

I fixed my eyes upon him as I said this, to remark the expression of his features; for,

for, to tell you the truth, I now began to entertain certain suspicions, that might have shaken the nerves of many a philosopher, yet when lights were brought, I could not but acknowledge that I had never seen a more ingenuous and prepossessing countenance ; a deep glow was on his cheek, but it could not be the blush of conscious turpitude. I have always thought that Lavater has written an infinite deal of nonsense, and an infinite deal of nothing ; I am nevertheless a physiognomist in my own way ; and it seemed to be impossible that evil could lurk under so handsome, so gentlemanly a countenance, for though a great many gentlemen, or *soi disant tel*, have terribly unfavourable faces, there is a gentlemanlike *mind*, that I am persuaded influences the features as well as the tones of the voice. In a moment, while my eyes were yet fixed on his countenance, the animated look was gone ; he grew pale and seemed struck as with some cruel recollection, and with a deep sigh
fat

sat down, making at the same time an apology, and asking if he could be of any use in trying to obtain horses. "If there are none in the stables of this house," answered I, "it will be bootless to make any other efforts. The wretched animals that draw me hither, are, I really believe, unable to get on; but I am a tolerable walker, there will be a moon about two o'clock, and if my servant thinks he can carry the portmanteau with my assistance, for I shall be content to share the labour, I shall greatly prefer walking the four leagues we must traverse, to remaining here. However Sir," continued I, again steadily looking at him, as the candle stood on a table between us—"you desired to have an opportunity of speaking to me; and I am now ready to receive your commands."

"I have already repented Sir," said the stranger in a low and solemn voice, "of my rashness.—I had no right to ask your attention, nor do I know you can,

or will be of use to me. But, when I speak in this country to an English gentleman, I still think I speak to a friend, and forget that upon me even that country has shut her once hospitable gates."

Again I thought it impossible any ill design could be concealed under this sort of conversation; yet I recollected I know not what stories I had heard of German and French adventurers.

"You have then been in England, Sir?"

"Yes; and I left it with—Oh! God, with what anguish, what despair, in my heart!"

"The gentlemen I saw with you Sir, were they your fellow travellers?"

"Not in *your* country, Sir; they are Germans of different provinces; men who have been in the army; men who have deserved better of those they have served, than to be circumstanced as they now are." This was, I thought, coming very near the point, and almost owning that they were

were in a situation which let them loose on the public.

He saw my suspicions, as I perceived by what followed: "I have not always been so associated, Sir, but calamity, you know, sometimes gives a man strange companions. I believe there is a proverb to that effect in most European languages."

"Give me leave to say, Sir," replied I, "that a young man of your appearance should never suffer any reverse of fortune to compel him to associate with those of whose principles and pursuits he is doubtful. Pardon me Sir, as you have been pleased to say I may be useful to you, it gives me a sort of right to speak to you with a freedom that an acquaintance of hardly three hours would certainly not authorise. Not only to a man of that rank which we denominate gentlemen, but to every man who is unhappy, I would listen with interest, and where I have the power, befriend with alacrity. But you must be sensible, that your appearance in such a

place, and with such associates, is ill calculated to give me a favourable impression of the business you may have with me, and I wish immediately to learn with whom I am conversing.

“ I do not wonder at your suspicions Sir, I rather wonder that you do not refuse to listen at all, to one who certainly does come with an equivocal appearance. To relate to you the history of my life, and to tell you how I wish for your advice, will take up some hours. Perhaps my ignorance of much that ought to be known before I thus address myself to your humanity, will be the best proof that I have no intention to deceive you ; I have, however, other vouchers.”

While he spoke, I had been considering how it would be best to pass the night, and having taken my resolution, I told my companion, who now appeared a very mysterious being, that I had resolved to stay where I was, but not to go to bed ; “ and if,” said I, “ you will partake with me
the

the refreshment I am about to order, and will remain here, it will give you an opportunity of relating what you wish to communicate, and I shall be gratified by knowing how I can be of service to you."

To this proposal the young man agreed, apparently with great satisfaction. I ordered the best supper and wine this very poor auberge afforded, and directed Arnold to go to the best bed he could find, as soon as he had eaten something. Arnold eyed my companion with a look which strongly indicated his dissatisfaction at leaving me in such society, and I saw that he had a much greater inclination to remain near me, than to try to sleep. He has been so accustomed, however, to obey without remonstrance, that he departed silently, though reluctantly; and in a melancholy dark cabin at Erlenstob, unrelieved by the blaze of a wood fire, which, in such a poor inn in England, would have lent it a transient cheerfulness, and with only the

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smouldering

smouldering dull heat of a bad stove, I took my seat by the side of a miserable dirty table, and the young Hussar placed himself opposite. The rising storm with rain driving against the wooden shutters, and the peculiar noise made by the rush of winds among firs which surrounded the house, the dismal looking place we were in, and even the dress of my companion, brought to my mind stories told of travellers benighted among extensive forests, and escaping by some miraculous means from being murdered by hordes of the most ferocious banditti. But I had a pair of good pistols in a travelling case, which Arnold had carefully cleaned and loaded at the last post. It has always been my resolution never to risk life against property, and rather to lose my money than kill a fellow-creature; but, when personal self-defence was clearly the question, my placability, of course, was at an end.

Yet the more I looked at the Hussar, the less precaution I thought it necessary to take.

take. Who he was, it was impossible to guess. All he had hitherto said, had only served to excite my wonder and curiosity, and of the truth of what he was going to tell me, I had no evidence but that internal evidence which truth generally impresses, but which is perhaps sometimes fallible. But now I am about to enable you to judge for yourself, whether the interest I take in this young man's fate, is a weakness or a right sentiment. He gave me his narrative principally in French, for though he speaks English extremely well; yet it is with some effort, and at times a little hesitation in the choice of his words; but French is to him more a mother tongue than that of the country where he was born. I give you therefore a translation of what he said, as nearly in his own manner as the idioms of the two languages admit.

IT has been said, that to complain is the solace of the unhappy ; but who is there, except a friend, that will listen to complaint ? and how seldom have the miserable friends ! I know not Sir, how it may be in *your country* ; the inhabitants of England, I have been taught to consider as possessing an higher style of mind than the people of the rest of the world. The noble struggles they have made for the freedom of mankind ; the illustrious men which have appeared in those glorious contests ; the good sense that is perceivable in the works of their best authors ; and the thousand virtues imputed to them in private life, rendered me, almost as soon as I began to read and to think, an idolator of the English name ; and, perhaps, England may afford brighter examples of the power of friendship, but my experience has hitherto shewn me, in some other countries, that to be unfortunate is to be guilty in the opinion of more than

two thirds of mankind ; little are the allowances made for the passions of youth, or for the tyranny of circumstances, which it is impossible always to explain ; and those whom mildness would retrieve from transient error, are often precipitated into guilt by the severity of reproof, or the hopelessness of rejection.

Oh ! if surviving my calamities, I ever should see others suffering the miseries that have been brought upon me, surely I shall have for them that patience and pity which to me has been denied !

But, no ! I dare hardly hope ; my fate is perhaps finished ; I know not if it be in the power of heaven itself, to restore to me one hour of happiness.

I am an Hungarian of a noble family. You are well versed in the history of modern Europe, and are acquainted with the oppressions, and the causes of those oppressions, which have impoverished our country, and reduced its nobles to become dependents in another. My father

was not descended from one of those families, that had patiently beheld the kingdom of Hungary sinking into a fief of the Empire. He was the representative of illustrious men, whose blood (which they esteemed to be as ancient and honourable as that which circulated in the veins of any of the crowned heads of Europe) had for ages been shed in the defence of their country against the Turks; or in a contention still more hopeless, when they saw Hungary falling under the power of strangers, who treated it rather as a conquered than an hereditary kingdom. And their lives passed in arms, or in the large fortified castles which had been theirs from time immemorial, amid the Carpathian mountains, had been occupied only in warlike exploits, and in delivering to their heirs the prejudices they had nourished, as well as their zeal for the rights they had defended.

My father differed little from those who had for some centuries preceded him.

Like

Like them he had been betrothed by his immediate ancestor, at a very early age, to the daughter of a neighbouring noble house ; but it happened, that besides many good qualities of temper and person, his wife brought to him an accession of fortune, more than equal to what he before possessed ; for her father and three brothers having fallen in the field within a very short time of each other, by this circumstance, the power and influence of my father, the Count Sommerfeldt, were so much enlarged, that when conciliating measures were adopted by the Court of Vienna, it was thought worth while to offer him greater advantages than were usually held forth as the price of submission. He submitted, yet reluctantly, to have three of his sons educated at Vienna, and successively enter into the Emperor's service ; but the ideas of the dependence of Hungary, and the degradation of her nobles, made this a very great sacrifice ;

and it seemed as if, while he yielded the policy of such a concession in regard to young men entering into life, his own sentiments were more decidedly outraged by the necessity of his acquiescence; and in his feudal retirement at his retired castle of Zolna, he nourished that lingering, but fruitless love of Hungarian liberty, which, as it was the first sentiment he had been taught to cherish, no circumstances could eradicate; and he thought with regret and disgust, that his children would learn to consider themselves only as Austrians.

I was eighteen years younger than the elder of these brothers; and my father having lost, when I was an infant, the wife with whom he had so long lived in domestic felicity, gave himself up without reserve to his affection for me, now the only companion of his solitude. In our continual conversations, and as I read to him the histories of other countries and of our own, he insensibly, and without looking

looking forward to the influence it might have on my future life, communicated to me those notions and impressions which had governed the beginning of his own. Distance in a great degree estranged *him* from my brothers. He fancied *they* were still more estranged from him by their own inclination, and that, had it not been for the large supplies of money they from time to time drew from him, they would have forgotten they had a father. The eldest, on coming of age, had succeeded to a very considerable part of my mother's fortune. He became master of the extensive domain of Gelnitz, and the oppressions he suffered to be exercised upon the farmers and peasantry depending upon him, had very much offended my father, who, having vainly remonstrated, felt himself disregarded and contemned in a matter, where, if had he not a right to dictate, he imagined he had, a strong claim to be heard. The second of his sons connected
himself

himself by marriage with a family; between whose ancestors and ours there had been a long and implacable hatred; and to aggravate his offence, my brother was reported to have been wilfully blind to the irregular conduct of his wife, to whom a man of the highest rank was supposed to have attached himself. The high sense of honour cherished by the old Hungarian nobles, revolted at this; and brooding in solitude over these circumstances, which were very probably exaggerated, the Count insensibly lost all affection for the two eldest of his sons, and from thence he began to dislike them, while he involved the third in his unpleasant reflections, and his expences and adherence to his brothers. Yet not being able to forget, that they were all the children of the woman he had so fondly loved, he accounted for their misconduct by the habits they had acquired; and as he had never been really reconciled to the Austrian government, he

he now thought of it with abhorrence, as having robbed him of the affection of his children, debauched their minds, and corrupted their hearts.

The domain on which he now lived, and which, at his death, was to fall into the possession of the eldest, he considered with regret. His peasants, thriving and contented, whom he had taken so much care to attach to the estate, would, he thought, cruelly feel the difference when, at his death, they should fall under the power of one who was now a stranger to them, and indifferent to every thing but obtaining money to be expended at Vienna. He could not, however, alienate an acre of this hereditary estate; and for that very reason, the idea of my brother's possessing it, and, perhaps, dismantling the castle, mingled with every thing he did, every thing he saw, and every hour the bitterness of this anticipation became less supportable.

The result, however, of all the reflections which the Count thus indulged, was a deter-

a determination, that however slenderly I might be provided for, I should never bear arms for the house of Austria. Yet he brought me up amidst those exercises which nerve the frame for hardship and exertion. My mornings, from the earliest dawn, whatever might be the weather, were passed in the mountain forests with which the castle of Zolna was surrounded; and the chase of the boar and the wolf was my ordinary occupation. No luxury of the table was allowed to pamper the appetite I acquired; and my bed was only such as is used by the humblest peasant.

That I was destined to encounter the difficulties of life, my father did not believe, because he thought he had guarded against such a probability; but he pleased his imagination, by making me such as he figured to himself were his rough Hungarian ancestors; and while the athletic life added strength and vigour to a constitution naturally good, he did not forget to give my

my mind those impressions of which his education had laid the foundation in his own, and which of late had received new force from the concurrence of many domestic and many public events.

The books we read together, were all such as taught me to idolize political liberty. He procured an Englishman to reside in the house, from the eleventh to the fifteenth year of my life. The works, therefore, of Sidney, and of Milton, were as familiar to me, as those of the few French authors who have written on other principles than those upon which the government of their country was conducted. My excellent, my respectable father! you followed only your own high ideas of the dignity and happiness of man, in thus instructing your son! Had his worldly interest, according to the usual acceptation of the world, been in your contemplation, you should rather have sent him to be a commis in some of the superfluous offices,
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of the most corrupt or despotic government that can be found in Europe.

Happy, however, to me were these regretted years. I was fondly attached to my father, and though I disdained to avail myself of his partiality, and never irritated his mind against my brothers, whom, while I hardly remembered them, I was disposed to love; yet one of the first and most pleasurable sensations I now recollect, is the consciousness of contributing to, if not of entirely forming, the happiness of my venerable parent. I had no competitor to check or rival me; and I felt no malignant passions. The people around me, considering me as the son of their ancient benefactor, loved me for his sake; and when I became old enough to practise the lessons he taught, and to shew that at least in *some* things I resembled him, they loved me still more for my own.

The

The Castle of Zolna was almost the only inhabited residence of that magnitude within many miles; and in such a seclusion, the young and active mind, forming itself almost entirely on books, raises around it an ideal world of its own creation. I saw for the future only the lovely chimeras which haunt the dreams of sanguine inexperience. My friends were the bravest, the best, the most faithful among men; and I had a visionary mistress, more lovely in her person than the virgins of Mahomet's Paradise, and in whose mind I imagined all those perfections which novel writers give their heroines, together with the tenderest attachment to me. I supposed, that from the enlightened state of the world, the time could not be very distant, when fraud, oppression, and violence should cease; when governments should seek the interest and welfare of the people; and that, when reason had wholly removed the veil of superstitions,
and

and every man found it his interest to act uprightly, the misery of which I read as the portion of the greater part of the human race, would be wholly at an end.

Pleasant ideal creations, how easily are your fairy scenes dissolved! How soon the sanguine and expanding heart, shrinks and recedes from the cruel realities of life!

The distractions of Poland, and the oppressions the people of that country were enduring, were the first public events that awakened indignation in my mind; and while I acquainted myself with the history of that unfortunate country, I was seized with an eager desire to take arms in her cause. Encouraged to entertain the highest, and even enthusiastic ideas of the freedom of mankind, I felt ashamed of pursuing only the beasts of the forest, while so large a portion of my fellow men, who might almost be called my compatriots, were suffering under contending despots; and the antipathy I bore the
Russians,

Russians, who seemed to have the greatest share in this inhuman spoil, added to the unconquerable desire I felt to draw my sword, even though the power whose subject I was, was a party, against this confederacy.

This inclination having once seized me, I nourished it with all the ardour of youth. I was only nineteen, an age when romantic chimeras possess stronger heads, and inflame blood less ardent than mine. This violent zeal, however, was at that time checked by my father. He was now near seventy years of age, and the infirmities of that period of life fell fast upon him. One of my brothers was dead, and though many years had passed since he had seen him, the paternal heart forgot his neglect, and bled for his untimely death. The eldest, who had obtained an higher rank at Vienna, and had taken the title of Vorgeth from an estate he had in Lower Hungary, was only nominally a general. His post about the person of the Emperor,

peror, and the charges he held, occupied him entirely, though he hardly thought it worth while to account, by these engagements, for his long neglect of his father, whom he had not seen more than three times in fifteen years. However accustomed to this estrangement, and though his feelings were now blunted by age and long endurance, Count Sommerfeldt was deeply afflicted by the reflection, that the name so long borne by his ancestors, and of which he thought he had so much occasion to be proud, should be sunk and forgotten in that of Vorgeth, a title of yesterday, and attached to an estate which was acquired, as my father thought, by means far less honourable than those by which tradition related the older honours of the race had been earned.

But though little more than general circumstances were known to my father, it was understood by those who were better informed, that his eldest and second sons inveighed against what they con-

sidered

sidered as the folly of his dotage in keeping me at home, when they had offered to place me advantageously in the only school for a gentleman—the army. It was true that such offers had been made, and rejected; yet in refusing, my father had condescended to state his reasons for desiring to keep me with him, now that his infirmities prevented his mingling in the scenes of active life. But this apology, and the terms in which it was made, my father concluding it with a warm panegyric on his Leopold, increased the displeasure it was intended to obviate, and I was an object of hatred in the opinion of my brothers, whom personally I could never have offended. That which I believe almost always happens in such cases, happened now. His fondness increased in proportion to their hatred; for though to him they did not express their invidious dislike, he insensibly understood it; it made him doubly solicitous to secure to me a more ample provision than usually falls to

to the share of a younger brother. But my excellent father was of too generous and liberal a disposition to be rich. He was too confident in the honesty of the officers of his household; and his principal steward, who governed him entirely as to his pecuniary affairs, not only deceived him in many other instances, but understood his own interest too well to exert any activity that was to have my emolument for its object. According to the common course of nature, the old Count could not live very long; and it would be in the power of his immediate successor, to confer many favours and advantages on those who had served his interest well; while I was not likely to have any power to repay kindnesses, whatever might be my gratitude.

The desire to take arms still agitated my mind, though I forbore to express it. My father, who less than ever liked to dispense with my company, imagined that he might counteract this passion by another. He wished I might find some young wo-
man

man of noble birth worthy of my love, and marry her ; fondly imagining, that as my elder brother would never inhabit Zolna, he would be content to take its revenues, and to suffer me to reside in the castle of my ancestors, because such a plan would, as my father thought, contribute to his own ease and interest even more than to mine. To attach me therefore to a spot where I should in fact be only a tenant on sufferance, and to divert me from the military enthusiasm which the Count so earnestly desired to discourage, he wished to give me a wife ; he wished it with the more ardour, because my elder brother was unmarried, though now near forty, the second had no child, and the third was of a character so dissolute and dissipated, that nothing was more improbable than his marrying. Towards me, therefore, my father looked, as the last hope of his race on whom its continuance depended.

These visions of a fond old man, were however very difficult to realize. From

the moment I had first learned to think, I conceived the utmost abhorrence at the custom almost universal among the Hungarian nobility, who are for the most part betrothed by their parents before they are ten years old, and I determined never to submit to so absurd a practice. I had therefore, while yet a boy, declared to the Count, that I would not ratify an engagement which he had entertained some thoughts of proposing, with the daughter of the Baron of Ebendorf, who was one of our nearest neighbours, for his residence was within thirty miles ; my positive rejection, however, of any such engagement, had prevented direct overtures from being made at that time. The young lady who was then thought of, and one of her two sisters, were now married, and the father having almost always resided within the last seven years at Vienna, our communication with the family had ceased. There was near us no other man of equal rank, or of any rank which my father could think of as an alliance, who had a daughter ; and nothing

thing was more improbable, had it been otherwise, than my finding among them a woman I should like; for having formed my notions of female perfection from the German, French, and English romances, which had made a great part of my idle reading, I had felt little other sensation than dislike, towards the few women of noble birth, to whom it had hitherto been my fortune to be introduced.

The projects therefore of my father, were not yet likely to find an object to promote them, when our neighbour, Baron Ebendorf, received an order from the Emperor, which consigned him for two years to the solitude of his own house at Renlitz. This temporary banishment was adjudged to be a slight punishment for some indiscretion in an affair of business, known only to the cabinet by which he was employed. With him came his only unmarried daughter; and the plan for a matrimonial connection between her and me, was immediately

renewed by my father, and followed with as much earnestness, as he had before desired it with her elder sister, though both were older than I was.

I understood what my father hoped for, when he so earnestly pressed me to visit the exiled Baron. I was unwilling to refuse going; yet recollecting all that had passed some years before, I endeavoured to give my visit the air of a mere enquiry of friendship, which I made as well for myself as my father, who was now unable to travel so far from home. The season was the end of a severe winter, and the roads almost impassable, so that whatever exertions I made, I found I could not return the same evening.

I found the Baron alone,—he received me as the son of his old friend; but the dejection naturally felt by disappointed ambition, was visible in his manner; and though he was at first reserved, the propensity which every man who thinks he is
ill

ill used, has to talk of himself, and to vindicate his own conduct, soon got the better of his reluctance to own his mortification. I listened with as much interest as I could, and certainly with great apparent attention, to a very elaborate and minute account of the origin of the offence he had committed, now no longer a secret, and which, as he explained it, appeared of course to have been no offence at all. He harangued on the inconsistency and ingratitude of courts, and enumerated at great length his own services, by his account of which I understood, that some months before his dismissal he had been employed in a private negociation of some importance with the cabinet of St. James's, and notwithstanding his advanced age, had made a journey to England, for which he was the better qualified by having a near relation married to an English nobleman, with whom he had always kept up an intercourse of friendship. I learned that his unmarried daughter had accom-

panied him in this expedition, and had been so well satisfied with the English manners and country, that only her duty and affection to him, had conquered her earnest wishes to pass the rest of her life in that island. But I found afterwards, that another reason existed for her return. There was not any thing so likely to prejudice me in favour of the young lady, as this predilection of her's for England. I wished to see if her appearance was equal to her taste, and now waited impatiently for the hour when I was to be introduced to her. It soon came; it came to determine the destiny of my future life, but that destiny was not to depend on the young Baroness Ulrica.

She was however extremely amiable and pleasing; perhaps too I might have thought her handsome, if I could have looked with impartiality on any other being, in the presence of the lovely young Englishwoman who was with her.

It

It were easy to tell you, that her complexion had all the fair delicacy, without the chalky whiteness common to German beauties. I might dwell on the fluctuating, yet beautiful tints of her cheeks, and the colour of her eyes and hair; but no description, however minute, could convey to you an idea of the expression, the animated, yet soft expression of her countenance; nor could either the pen or the pencil do justice to the grace of her form. It is certain that the form, the walk, every look, and every attitude, serve to express character, as well as words can express it. Every trait about this lovely girl declared, that the mind inhabiting the frame gave it its greatest charm. She spoke; her imperfect German was a thousand times more eloquent than the most studied correctness of language would have been from the mouth of any other woman: But when I engaged her to converse in French and English, I found that if her education had not been excellent, she had supplied the want of it by ex-

tensive reading, without the slightest degree of pedantry; and that she had an exquisite taste; and that delicacy of *taste*, if I may avail myself of a French phrase, which no art can give, since it is the genuine offspring of good sense and high sensibility. I did not, as you may easily imagine, make all these discoveries at my first introduction; but her personal beauty, and the sweetness of her voice, fascinated me at the first interview, and took from me all inclination to quit Ronlitz, as I had at first intended, the next day. I remained there near a week, and returned to Zolna, meditating on nothing but this enchanting girl; and so totally was I occupied by her idea, that when my father, anticipating all he wished from my prolonged stay, began to question me with extreme anxiety as to his friend the Baron, and the young Ulrica, whom he had never seen since her infancy, I answered him so little to the purpose, and with so little appearance of interest towards those I had been to visit, that had

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he not been prepossessed by other ideas, he could not have failed to remark my cold and absent manner.

Of the fair Englishwoman I forbore to speak at all ; and when to the Count's interrogatories, whether the Baroness Ulrica was handsome ? tall ? agreeable ? I answered in the affirmative, he was perfectly satisfied that I could not fail to be enamoured of her, and took it for granted, that the event he most desired would follow of course. I saw this with infinite concern, yet knew not how to undeceive him. His conversation the following days encreased my embarrassment ; and my own meditations, when I could retire to think alone, were far from lessening that which I felt in his presence. The image of Mademoiselle Gertrude Leicester (for so she was called, the English term, *Miss*, not being familiar to German ears) was ever present to me, and I believed it impossible that I could long exist without seeing her again ; yet I knew that my

visits to Renlitz would be considered as intended to the Baroness Ulrica, while I might perhaps be feeding a hopeless flame; for I extremely doubted whether my father, whatever was his solicitude to see me married, would hear of an alliance with a woman of another country, who was not perhaps nobly born, and was, I supposed, destitute of fortune; for amidst the playful gaiety of her conversation with her friend, I thought I had made out that she was dependent, or at least not in such circumstances as enabled her to be her own mistress.

I can now speak with some degree of coolness, of what at that time passed in my mind; but then it was in tumults even to agony. I revolved incessantly all the possibilities which were against my hopes of happiness, and love, far from rendering me sanguine, represented all the difficulties I foresaw as insurmountable barriers, which served, however, to render me wretched, without diminishing my passion.

My

My father at length began to express his surprize, that I felt no inclination to repeat my visit at Renlitz. I disdained a falsehood; I felt, that in this instance its present ignominy was not all I had to apprehend, but that it would infallibly lead to remoter and deeper mischief. I recalled to my mind that rectitude, whatever may be the event, gives consolation, though happiness may be lost. I was too well assured, that my father would be severely hurt when he learned how contrary my wishes were to the plans he had cherished; yet I was also certain, that to conceal the truth would only be to deepen the wound, which the knowledge of it must finally inflict; and having made these reflections, I blushed at having a moment concealed it.

My father, whose thoughts dwelt continually on the marriage he wished so much to see completed, soon repeated his observation, "That he wondered I had not thought of visiting again his friend

Ebendorf;" "Sir," replied I, "you would be less solicitous to promote my going to Renlitz, if you knew, that with an infinite restraint on my inclinations, I have forbore, merely because I feared that the consequences of it might eventually give you some pain." The good old Count earnestly demanded an explanation, yet I saw with the liveliest concern, the dread he had of hearing it, and it was with difficulty that I described to him the impression I had received from the young stranger, of whom I confessed I knew little more than that it was impossible for me ever to love any other woman; and that I had therefore too great respect for the Baroness Ulrica, and her father, to visit them, lest they might impute my assiduity to intentions which I never could entertain.

This was the only instance in my life, where my father's will had not been my law; and at first he expressed all those feelings, which my dissenting from it now,
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and in a point where he thought my own happiness so greatly concerned, naturally enough excited in the breast of a father, accustomed from me to implicit obedience, and to consider that obedience and my affection for him as all he had left to soothe his latter days. I was affected by the distress which I had given to a being to whom all my gratitude was due. My tenderness, my reverence, had never been shaken by the foibles incident to advanced life; and now I was almost ready to promise that I would renounce every view that in its completion would overcloud his remaining days. But the conviction that my own would be miserable, if I relinquished the hope of rendering myself acceptable to the woman who alone occupied my thoughts, prevented me from giving utterance to a promise which I could not have kept. Had, however, my father talked to me long in a style of angry authority, I should have been hurt less; but when he shed tears, tears that so
feldom

feldom fall from the eyes of the aged, when he deplored his destiny, in being long since forsaken by all his children but me, and exclaimed that *now* his last hope, his last reliance was about to desert him, I again thought I had resolution enough to conquer my unhappy passion: yet, when I was alone I contrived, with that sophistry so easy to those who would reconcile their inclination to their duty, to persuade myself that I might not only obtain my father's consent to this marriage, but that it might be rendered a source of happiness to him, and in being so, redouble my felicity. Is the power of self-illusion thus possessed by the human mind, a blessing or a curse? Alas! the facility with which I wove bowers of imaginary bliss, and decorated scenes of elysian beauty, have served only to embitter and make more insupportable the sad realities of my fate!

Amidst these aerial and visionary schemes, reason would not unfrequently interfere,
and

and represent that I was building my fairy palaces on foundations more fluctuating, more uncertain, than the waves of the sea. —My fair Englishwoman might already have given away her heart: she was too lovely, too fascinating, not to have had adorers whithersoever she went; and, though friendship had brought her to a wild solitude, among the mountains and forests of Hungary, it was hardly to be expected that affection of a livelier description for a stranger should induce her to stay there. I remembered how much I had read and heard of the haughty partiality of the English for their own country; and I began to doubt whether my reverence towards my father would ever be put to the trial.—Well then! If Mademoiselle Leicester *should* repulse me, there would end all the struggle which now distracted me. I did not perhaps think humbly of my personal pretensions; yet if this sweet Gertrude did not love and prefer me to all the world, it would not
I hoped

I hoped be difficult to determine to think of her no more. Reason, however, had something farther to say—she suggested, that since my success was doubtful, and the chances against me so many, while the unhappiness it would inflict on my father was alone certain, it would be better to attempt crushing in its infancy this passion, which might perhaps be attended with so many evils. But these wise reflections were put to flight by the recollection of one look of the lovely Gertrude; and I meditated only how to see her, without suffering it to be supposed that the Baroness Ulrica was the object of my visits. Weeks, however, passed; the impression was not diminished; but I dreaded the inference that might be drawn if I went to Zolna, and fed my passion by dreaming incessantly on the object I forbore to see. My prudence and forbearance however were not to be taxed very severely by my enforced absence, and chance was to mock at my attempts to

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exercise them.—Baron Ebendorf now earnestly desired to see his old friend; for, fallen from the height of prosperous fortune, his mind was softened by adversity, and he secretly reproached himself for the dereliction of his former principles, and the neglect of his former connections. Other motives might also have their weight; and he wrote to the Count, informing him, that, to wave all ceremony between such old friends, he intended to bring his daughter and her English companion, and pass some days at Zolna. The approaching spring removed every local impediment; and no objection could be raised by my father, who now dreaded the visit he would before have considered as the happiest circumstance that could occur.

The party arrived; the old friends, now, in some degree, associated in misfortune, renewed their former intimacy, and seemed to feel their re-union with warmer sentiments than men of their age are usually capable of. My father could not
sufficiently

sufficiently express his pleasure at seeing the daughter of his old friend beneath his roof; and I saw that he could hardly forbear openly expressing the hopes this visit revived; for the Baroness Ulrica was a fine figure; her face was rather handsome, her manners pleasing when she threw off a certain degree of coldness and reserve; and there was a dignity about her which was, of all other external qualities, that which was the likeliest to excite my father's admiration. He could not imagine that it was possible I could prefer a stranger to her.

On the lovely Gertrude, who to me was more fascinating, more resistless than ever, the Count looked with no favourable eyes. I saw that he turned them towards her with reluctance, and was sorry to find it impossible to refuse acknowledging her beauty: yet he would not allow that it could excuse the sudden impression she had made on me. He determined to think it was mere beauty, and to flatter himself

himself that by *that* I should not long be enchanted. Yet when he again beheld her, and beheld her in conversation, this slender hope, as I could plainly perceive, failed him; and though he did not now himself converse in French so easily as in the younger part of his life, he understood it well enough to comprehend that there was no want of soul to animate the form, or light up the countenance of this angelic girl; and I was soon convinced, that had Mademoiselle Gertrude been fortunate enough to have had only *ten* quarterings, though six-and-thirty are generally insisted upon, and to have been born in one of the Circles, or in Hungary or Bohemia, the Count would himself have solicited her for his son: yet he was unwilling to own this, even to himself; and tried to dislike without a reasonable cause, since a reasonable cause could *not* be found, her, who raised in his mind so uneasy a contention between prejudice and reason.

His

His original project could not be, he hoped, desperate, while the Baroness Ulrica seemed wholly ignorant of this unfortunate partiality ; and that she might remain so as long as possible, he exerted himself to engage her attention by every mark of kindness, and even of admiration, well meant and old fashioned, which Ulrica received with a degree of good humour that gave me an high opinion of her temper. Indeed it was impossible to think otherwise than well of a young woman who had merit enough to have created so lively a friendship as Mademoiselle Leicester felt for her ; and who had sense enough not to shew any womanish jealousy at the superiority of the fair stranger, which it was easy to see all hearts involuntarily acknowledged.

But the truth was, the Baroness Ulrica was less ambitious of general admiration, because she had disposed of her affections ; and was actually engaged, though by no means with her father's hearty concurrence,
to

to a young nobleman of Moldavia, whom she had met with at Vienna. The Baron, however, since his birth was quite as illustrious as his own, had reluctantly consented to their union, when the young man, now a Colonel in a regiment of Germans hired by a foreign court, should return to Vienna. But the lovers had lately very seldom found an opportunity of corresponding; the disgrace and exile of the Baron had of course affected his fortune; and I thought it evident, that from his opinion of the fortune my father had in long retirement amassed for me, Baron Ebendorf would much more willingly have bestowed his daughter on the son of his old friend, and reflected with concern on her engagement. The secret of this intended union, Ulrica herself confided to me, when, sitting with only her young friend and me, she laid aside the cold dignity she affected in more general company, and seemed to satisfy that self-love of which every human being has a portion,

by

by giving me to understand, she courted not the admiration which she perceived I was incapable of feeling for her. I was enchanted by her confidence; it removed all the apprehensions I had of being compelled to thwart my father's inclinations, and left me no other care than how to bring about the gratification of my own. I loved Ulrica a thousand times more than I could have done if this had not been known. I now considered her as one of those on whom my happiness was to depend; I endeavoured to make her my friend; and my father, who observed a change in my manners towards her, once more flattered himself that his wishes would be accomplished. I took, however, the earliest occasion to undeceive him: hurt and mortified, he then spoke of his renewed disappointment to the Baron, who acknowledged that his daughter had made such an engagement; and the two fathers had only to console each other.

This

This scheme then being evidently blasted for ever, the Count, dreading lest my inclination to make a campaign should return, began to consider whether it was not possible to suffer me to be happy in my own way, with the woman I had chosen; and he set about obtaining from the Baron Ebendorf all the particulars he could learn, relative to Mademoiselle Leicester. But his distress of mind was immeasurably increased by the result of these unfortunate enquiries, for he found that in truth Gertrude was not noble—not even related to nobility; her father was a country gentleman, and only the second of his race who had been dignified with the appellation of Esquire, the last and commonest, or at least most abused, of all titles given or assumed in England!—Three, only three generations back, her ancestors had been farmers, whose very name was unheard of but in their own obscure parish. Nor had she, to counterbalance this misfortune, that advantage
which

which another nation (the Scottish), hardly less bigotted to the phantom of high birth, are for the most part willing to allow as in some degree as an apology for the want of it, when the proudest of their nobility deign to accept wives from the traders or rich manufacturers of England—Gertrude had little or no fortune, and the small portion that might belong to her in right of her mother, could not be her's till after her father's death, who was yet only in the middle of life, and had by a second marriage a numerous family. He had, however, given his two eldest daughters an expensive education; one of them had married early, and the excursion of the other to Germany he had not opposed, flattering himself that other countries might be more likely than England to produce men who did not consider money as the principal recommendation of a wife.

The Baron, to whom my father now communicated his uneasiness in regard to me,

me, was very far from encouraging any dereliction of those notions as to matrimonial alliances in which they had both been educated, and declared that nothing could in his opinion compensate for the failure of being able to prove nobility on both sides, for at least sixteen descents. He represented how probable it was, that I should at length be the sole representative of the family, at least the only one to transmit its name and honours to the future world; how then could he answer it to the Counts and Countesses yet unborn, the future supports and ornaments of their country, if their blood received the cruel alloy of having had a plebeian mother, the daughter of an obscure man, and of a country too, where whoever was rich might purchase nobility, though the son of a cobbler? My father, since he had quitted the world, and addicted himself to reading, especially those books which his principles in some other respects more immediately recommended to him, had

shaken off *some* of the prejudices of his old Teutonic education, and learned, that merit was *sometimes* almost as good a title to respect as thirty-six quarters; but of *this* most inveterate of all the prepossessions that had been given him, he could never entirely divest himself, at least when the marriage of one of his own family was in question; and thus roused by the opinion of his old friend, all those prejudices returned with even more than their former inveteracy, and he agreed with Baron Ebendorf, that to have a son fall in the field, would be a less misfortune than to have him live, only to transmit degraded and vulgar blood to posterity.

While these good old men were thus deciding against my plan of happiness, it was growing more than ever dear to me, and was interwoven with every fibre of my heart. I saw Gertrude every day; and every hour, and every moment of those days, added to the ardent passion that had taken possession of my soul.

Though

Though I had not dared to declare it, she could not help seeing it, and fondly fancying it did not displease her, I found myself soon hurried away, and regardless of every other consideration, thought only of obtaining her. And surely a man of my age, for I was not then twenty, educated as I had been, and feeling for the first time a passion for so lovely a woman, might well be forgiven the wild enthusiasm with which I pursued my object, especially when there was nothing to oppose my wishes but customs and prejudices that common sense revolts from. The fetters of ignorance, pride, and folly, shaken off by the most enlightened of mankind, alone withheld me from happiness; and not a moment would they have been unbroken, had I not hazarded, in dashing them away, to injure the peace of a mistaken but revered old man, who in this single instance was likely to oppose me.

To reconcile him to my intentions was therefore to be attempted; but I saw, that

while the Baron remained with him, that would be impossible. Yet when the Baron went, Gertrude, out of whose sight I could not now exist, would go also. She would go too before I should declare in words, as I had already done by my eyes, the passion which I felt; for though I believed she understood, and was far from being insensible of it, her acknowledging that I was not indifferent to her, and that she would not consider my being of another country as an obstacle, was absolutely necessary to give me sufficient resolution to conquer the other difficulties that were in my way. I sought then an opportunity to explain myself, yet doubted whether, when it arrived, I should have courage to speak. Gertrude, on her part, seemed to suspect my intention, and fearfully avoided being alone with me. The easy and good-humoured gaiety, which had helped to enchant me, now gave place to a mild and somewhat pensive reserve; and though she had never scrupled till now walking
with

with me alone, when Ulrica, who was of an indolent disposition, declined going out; yet after my behaviour became more particular, and I had once or twice hazarded a speech she could hardly affect to misunderstand, she became more guarded and cautious, and found some excuse to escape our solitary walks, and remain with her companion.

An accident at length procured me the occasion I desired. The Baroness Ulrica, who had not heard from her lover for a term much longer than had ever happened before, was so dejected that she often sought solitude; and, after pouring her sorrows into the bosom of her friend, would shut herself up whole hours to brood over them alone, and form conjectures as to the reason of this long delay. Her father well understood the cause of that melancholy she could not conceal, and secretly flattered himself that something or other had happened to prevent the completion of a marriage which, though he had consented to

it, he never approved. Ulrica was so conscious of this, and so averse to her father's observations, that she had often recourse to the common subterfuge on these occasions, and declared she suffered so much from pains in her head, that far from being able to mix in the party, she could endure no voice but that of Gertrude, and sometimes not even hers. Gertrude however, who trembled whenever she imagined it was likely that I might obtain an opportunity of speaking to her, confined herself for the most part to her own room when she was not with Ulrica.

It was now that season when every country is in some degree beautiful. The wild and savage appearance of that around our old habitation, was softened by the verdure and the foliage of spring. Gertrude had been accustomed to pass the greater part of her time in one of the most romantic counties of England; she was passionately fond of wood walks and mountainous scenery, and to indulge this taste
 she

she took every occasion of wandering round the Castle when she thought there was no danger of being surprised into a tête-à-tête with me. I sought to meet her in these rambles; she observed my design, and appeared to relinquish them. The time was approaching when the Baron, who had already staid longer than he had intended, was to depart, and it was necessary for me to know my fate.

It happened, that an affair which my father wished to entrust to my management rather than to that of his steward, was to be transacted at a place about four leagues, distance; I repaired thither before day, meaning to return by noon. I found the affair easily adjusted by my interference; and returning as speedily as I could, I arrived at about ten o'clock in the midst of one of those extensive woods, which on every side surrounded the abode of my father. I met several parties of Zingari, who are what are called in other countries of Europe, Bohemians or Gypsies, but who

not unfrequently obtain a transient subsistence in the forests of Hungary, by being employed to burn charcoal for the supply of the powder mills. Numbers of asses, or small horses, are frequently seen passing through the woods, loaded with charcoal, and driven by families of these wandering people. At this time I heard, as I rode along, the voices of some of them as in dispute, and understood enough of their jargon to comprehend that they talked of a lady, a demoiselle. I urged my horse immediately under the thick trees and underwood, which concealed some of the persons who were speaking, and saw with astonishment Gertrude surrounded by a group of women, who seemed to have terrified her so much, that she had no power to move from them. She saw me, and clasping her hands together, uttered my name; when eagerly leaping from my horse, I bade the people retire, which they seemed glad to do, while Gertrude, pale and faint, almost threw herself into my

my arms. "For heaven's sake tell me," cried I, "what has happened? Why do you tremble so, loveliest Miss Leicester? These people surely have not dared to insult you?"—"Oh no, it is nothing," replied she, "nothing indeed; but I advanced too far alone into their haunts, and my appearance, and my not understanding them, excited their curiosity. The noise one or two made brought others, and I certainly began to be a good deal alarmed at being surrounded by them, when you fortunately arrived." I was not quite satisfied with this account, for I found her terror to be greater than I thought such an adventure could have occasioned, if it had been only as she had related it. But the effect was to my wishes most propitious; for she leaned on my arm, a favour she would never indulge me with till then, and even suffered me to press her to my heart. By degrees, as she was unable to walk fast, she recovered her breath, and I thought no

other opportunity might offer for the declaration I meditated. Trembling then almost as much as she did, I ventured to disclose what I knew she was well assured of already. It was received with modest timidity, yet without any affectation. Nothing however tells worse than a dialogue between lovers. I pass over, therefore, the more minute particulars of an interview which will remain for ever deeply engraven on my memory, and only relate that I had the inexpressible happiness to find myself so far from being indifferent to her, that she frankly told me the invincible obstacles which she supposed there must be to our union, was the only reason she had been so desirous of avoiding the explanation; and when I exerted all my eloquence, to conquer her doubts as to the removal of those obstacles, she owned, that could they be removed, my being the native of another country, and that country so remote from her own, would not deter her from resolving to pass her life with

with me, if the consent of her father could be obtained; and of that consent, she assured me, there was little reason to doubt. This conversation brought us home, when Gertrude, in still greater emotion, which was however easily accounted for, retired immediately to her own room. At dinner she did not appear, and Ulrica informed us, she was so much indisposed as to have given her considerable alarm. I learned afterwards, that she had been robbed by the Zingari, of her purse, a gold smelling bottle, a seal, and some other trinkets; and that she believed they would have proceeded to rob her of her clothes, if accident had not at that moment brought me to her relief. I could not but admire the resolution with which she had concealed this atrocity at the moment, and she confessed to me afterwards, that the fierce and savage appearance of the men, several of whom were, she knew, not many paces distant, and whom I had indeed heard disputing about her, had so

greatly alarmed her for my safety, that she determined to conceal the robbery, lest I should attempt to make them restore the stolen articles, and by that means be involved in a dangerous contention. All this may perhaps appear trifling in the recital; but on me, already in love almost to adoration, such circumstances had an indescribable effect, and every moment as it passed, added to my passionate attachment. I became so impatient to assure myself that Gertrude would be mine, and with so much eagerness preferred my suit to the Count, that unable to resist the importunity of a son he fondly loved, and flattered by the affectionate idea of seeing children of mine around him before he died, he consented to write to the father of Gertrude, and explaining all he meant to do for me, solicit his consent to our union. Charmed to find this first difficulty conquered, I took immediate measures for securing the safe arrival of the letter in England, by dispatching my own servant

servant to Vienna. The day that the Baron's party were to leave us I now saw approach with less dread; I was, I believed, secure of the heart of Gertrude; she suffered me to talk to her of my love, to talk to her whole hours of our schemes of future happiness. We agreed exactly in our tastes, in our sentiments, and she approved of my resolution never to contradict the old Count's plans for our residence at Zolna, but when he should be no more, to retire from a place where I could only consider myself as a dependent on my elder brother, and to purchase some lesser domain of our own. The two old men, the Baron Ebendorf and my father, were not only reconciled to my intentions of marrying, but were equally fond of Gertrude; yet the Baron saw with concern and alarm the deep and increasing despondence of his daughter, and Gertrude felt all her own prospects overcast by the anxiety which embittered the life of her friend.

After

After a visit of almost two months they went back to Ronlitz, and I escorted them. My absence was not long, for my father could less than ever bear our separation. He was almost wholly employed, whether I was absent or present, in projects for the encrease of my fortune: he had already amassed a very considerable sum, and Graab, his steward, was constantly occupied in accounts and arrangement, which had only my advantage for their object. The Count was determined to make the provision he intended for me greater than he had called it in his letter to England; and though not unfrequently a severe pang would follow the reflection that Gertrude was a woman of no family, he conquered it by remembering, that it is the man who enobles his posterity, and that though his grandchildren would not gain, they would not lose a single quarter from the family coat by this alliance.

Time passed on the wings of delight; it fled but too swiftly while I was with Gertrude,

Gertrude, as I contrived to be as often as my father would suffer me to steal away for a few days. The period was almost elapsed when an answer in the usual course might be received from England; and I trembled with hope, yet with apprehension, every time I saw any one arrive who had the air of a courier, for I had directed an acquaintance at Vienna to send one with it as soon as it should arrive. This answer, so long, so anxiously expected, at length came. It was propitious!—it spoke only of the high honour an alliance with the Count Sommerfeldt would do to the family of Leicester. Nothing could be better adapted to flatter my father's foibles than the whole of its contents. Mr. Leicester wrote also to his daughter, informing her of his entire approbation; and he named a banker at Vienna, on whom he had procured a credit for two hundred pounds, to enable her to make such purchases as might be proper on her marriage.

Very

Very vain would it be for me to attempt conveying an idea of the happiness I now felt. Oh! days of exalted felicity! ye were too exquisite not to be transient. If, Sir, you have ever loved, and been flattered by the dear hope of passing your days with an adored object—”

The young Hungarian here hesitated: he saw by my countenance that his narrative had called up recollections in my mind too painful to be endured; I was, indeed, obliged to rise, and leave him for a few moments—a pause seemed requisite to us both—But now deeply interested for him, I recovered myself as soon as I could, and in a few moments he proceeded:

“As if every circumstance was to contribute to the general satisfaction, Ulrica received at this time a letter from her lover, accounting for his not having written, by informing her that he had been wounded and a prisoner for some months, but was now released; out of danger
from

from his wounds, which were likely to be of less consequence than they had at first threatened; and being almost immediately to be exchanged, he expected to return in less than two months to Vienna. Of her father's disgrace, and consequent abatement of interest and fortune, he had heard, but it did not seem to have made, what she had apprehended, any change in his affectionate attachment to her. The gloom that had hung over her, and damped the cheerful spirits of her friend, was now therefore dissipated. Preparations were going on for the hour that was to make Gertrude mine; a few days only were to intervene before the Baron and the two ladies were to come to Zolna, where my father desired the ceremony should be performed; I went to visit my lovely Gertrude for the last time before we were to meet to part no more. I remained at Ronlitz three days, and then returned home, delightedly anticipating the happiness

ness which I was so soon to see out of the reach of fortune.

I arrived at the great gates, and dismounting, gave my horse to my servant, and was entering the court, when, to my astonishment, I saw two soldiers in an uniform which I knew to be that of the Emperor's guard, who, with bayonets fixed, opposed my passage. I demanded what they meant? they answered insolently, that they obeyed orders, which were to prevent my passing into that house, where I had nothing more to do. Astonishment checked at first the expressions of my indignation—I was like one who had received a stroke of thunder; but in a moment the violent passions, which were constitutional with me, were roused; half suffocated, incapable of reasoning or of listening to reason, had it been spoken to me, I drew the *couteau de chasse* I usually wore, and made a stroke at the soldier who had been most offensively forward.

forward in language and gesture. He evaded it with difficulty, and before I could repeat it, a blow given by a musket or bayonet on my head behind, deprived me of sight and sense; and I became wholly unconscious of what befel me, till I found myself in the cottage of a mountain peasant, whose little cabin was perched on a rugged declivity among the woods, almost three miles from Zolna. It seemed to be early morning; I looked around me with wonder, but in an instant the recollection of what had happened to me at home returned; I started up, but soon found myself compelled to return to the posture I had quitted, for my head was giddy, and a faint sickness made every object appear indistinct and confused. I saw nobody, but my effort to make myself heard brought an old man into the room: he approached, and spoke to me in a tremulous voice—it was Hans, an ancient servant of my fathers, who had been at his
own

own request dismissed a few years before, to live in a little abode near Zolna, which was built by my father for his gardener, whose wife was the daughter of this honest old domestic. He alone, of all whom the castle contained, had either had the power or the will to follow my fallen fortunes; but when he had made himself known to me, and I enquired what had happened, and where my father was, the poor man appeared afraid of telling me what he knew; and it was long before I could understand the occasion of the scene that I had suffered from.

“Sir,” said Hans, “I pray God all may come right again; but his will be done!—Who would think of a son’s behaving after that manner to a father?”

“What son, Hans? what do you mean? what could have been the reason of my being driven from my father’s house?—Hasten, I entreat you, to tell me, and assist me to rise, for whatever has happened, my place cannot be here.”

“My

"My poor good old master!" repeated Hans, with a deep sigh—"for my part, Sir, I would I had not lived to see this day!"

"For the love of God tell me at once what you know—all this is insupportable."

"Be calm then, dear Sir," cried the old man—"for indeed you have great occasion for resolution, and I am afraid you are very ill too. Well, Sir, I will tell you:—I saw you and Maximin your servant ride by quite early one morning—it was three days ago. Presently came a messenger, or some such looking man: he went up to the castle, and I saw him in half an hour come back the same way. The next day, and the next about the same hour, the same man came again, and returned as he had done before. Early on the morning after, I saw the great Count Vorgeth, my Lord your father's eldest son: it was a new sight to us, and a fine one too, for we had seen nothing so grand
for

for a long time in these parts; he had abundance of attendants with him, and a guard of soldiers. But all the people, instead of being glad to see their lord that was to be, were struck of an heap as it were, for they remembered to be sure what had happened at Galburgh, and besides did not know what to make of the soldiers. I don't know all that passed at the castle, only what I could make out by George Graff, my son-in-law; and by him we were told, that the young Count, or great Count Vorgeth, for young to be sure he is not, had taken away at once all authority from our old master by an order of his Majesty the Emperor; and so he called all the servants up, and told them, that his father's great age having made him incapable of managing his affairs, and making him liable to be imposed upon, and to give away his estate, and form connections with wicked and dangerous people, *he* was from that time appointed by the Emperor to take the estate out of the hands -

hands of his father, who should be taken great care of, and want for nothing. Our old master did not appear; two people that the great Count had brought from Vienna were put to take care of him in the apartments over the garden terras; and his Flemish servant Le Brion, whom I remember from a boy, came to me in such trouble, that indeed it made my heart ache so I could hardly ask him any questions; but if I had, he would not have had much time to answer them, for scarce had he been talking to me half a minute, when two men belonging to the great Count came and hurried him away. I thought all this looked very bad, and, old and feeble as I am, I could not help going up to the castle. Ah! Sir, I heard nothing the first time but what made me more out of heart than I was before; and I found furly faces and strange people all about it, who were one and all ready enough to tell me I had no business there—so I went back to our little place, downcast enough.

George

George was told he was not wanted in the garden till farther orders; and we began to think what would come to ourselves out of all this; but then I remembered that when you came home, Sir, most likely you would interfere for your father's old servants, and I laid my account to meet you by the way, and so did George, but we both missed you."

While the old man spoke, I recollected that I came round an unusual way to visit a sick tenant.—Hans proceeded—"It was clear enough that my going near the castle was not desired. Ah! Sir, how hard it seemed to me, who am but a servant, to be shut out of those gates, and what must it be to you!—I say, Sir, that though I was not admitted, and was desired more than once to stay in my own cottage if I valued my own safety, I could not rest quiet, and so toward evening I went up again; and just as I got to the great oak tree—it was last night, and growing dusk,—that oak tree that is at the

corner of the bye path leading from the front road up round to the west wall, I thought I saw a man lying all along upon the ground. My heart misgave me that some wicked doings had been going on, and I thought it not unlikely my turn might be next ; but I am old, and have lived long enough, so I went up to the place, and it was just light enough for me to see it was you. I thought you dead, for the wound in your head had covered the ground with blood ; but dead or alive I was determined not to let you stay there, for now I began to fear the worst, and that you and my poor old master were both to be got rid off, and therefore that to carry you to the castle would be the same thing as to carry you to be murdered, if that was not done already. I stood a while considering—God knows with an heavy heart, what I should do ; then I heard somebody come up the path, and glad enough I was to find it was my son Graff—my daughter, frightened about me,

had sent him to see after me. I shewed him the piteous sight: he is young and strong, and between us we brought you hither, the nearest place we could think of where we thought you might be in safety, if it pleased God you recovered, till you could think a little what was to be done."

Here ceased the honest old man; and I am sure, Sir, you will judge how incapable I must be of relating what passed in my mind while he was speaking. I understood the motive of my brother's conduct, and knew the effect of the order he had obtained too well not to see its consequences. From the most delicious and well-founded hopes of felicity, I was sunk at once into an abyss of despair—Gertrude was lost to me for ever—I was a beggar, an outcast, and could no longer think of uniting her fate to that of a wretch like me. My father—my tender, my indulgent father, that good and venerable old man, was a prisoner in his own house,

house, even if his life was spared ; and this blow, cruel and unjust as it was, was struck by one of his sons, because he had loved another of them too well !

By a man of my fiery and impetuous disposition, who had never had occasion to learn prudence, or practise enforced patience, all this was not to be borne without bringing on a degree of frenzy ; and nothing but the state of weakness to which I was reduced from the loss of blood, prevented me from going at all events to the house which was now the prison, if not the grave, of my father. But when, in the violence of those agonising emotions that assailed me, I attempted to rise, I fell back senseless ; a fever followed ; I became delirious ; and the wound in my head, for want of proper dressing, was so painful, that I was conscious of nothing but the acutest personal sufferings, save only when, in a lucid interval, I raved of Gertrude and of my father. The peasant to whom the cabin

belonged had fled in terror of the great Count, and there was none near me but the old man, who, with feeble hands, administered to my necessities as well as he could; his son-in-law and his daughter sometimes stealing away to bring food to their father and to me: but for food I had little occasion.

These poor people, who had themselves a family of children, were alarmed at the character and power of the new Count: Graff, whose fears were irritated by his wife, desired to leave a place where he dreaded the tyranny of its present possessor; he had wages due to him, and dared not demand them; while the poor old man, to whose zeal I owed my preservation, was fearful of staying, yet unwilling to leave a spot where he had passed the best part of his life, and where he hoped to have ended it in peace. Half insensible, sometimes sunk in stupor, and at others talking incoherently, I heard by snatches, and imperfectly understood, their debates.

debates. When I could command my recollection, I tried to think ~~soberly~~ on what I ought to do, and how I could once more see my father and Gertrude, and then die; for such was my weakness from loss of blood, and from the fever which was the consequence of my wound, that the spirit natural to my age and character was sunk, and I was incapable of forming any other wish than to resign my being, since hope seemed to be excluded from my future life.

Such an advantage has a sound and vigorous constitution, and so strong are the powers of nature at my age, that without any other help than what Hans and his family gave me, I recovered almost insensibly—my fever was gone, and the wound in my head, only by having my hair cut off, and the application of warm water, began to cicatrise. I was capable, after a day or two more had passed, of sitting up—but the pain I felt both in my head and heart seemed to bow

me to the earth. I crept out of the wretched cabin—I gazed on the woods that surrounded it, and looked up at the summer sky, but all seemed changed, and I doubted whether I was not in the delirium of a fever, or had not by some accident lost my senses. Alas! it was all but too real—I asked of my faithful old friend, who hardly ever left me, how much time had passed since I became incapable of reckoning its course, and his answer informed me, that on the very day I made this enquiry under such circumstances, I was to have been the husband of Gertrude!

With returning strength, however, returned my sense of injury and thirst of redress. Redress!—where and how was I to seek it? I applied to Hans for information—I learned that none were admitted to enter the castle, nor within the walls of the court-yards that surround it; that the old servants had been paid and dismissed, with orders not to remain within the domain;

domain; that the farmers and peasants who had been accustomed to supply the family were never suffered to approach nearer than the outward gate, where centinels still remained; and that the former character and present proceedings of the great Count had inspired the inhabitants of the surrounding country with so much terror, that there was none who dared hazard any thing for me, who, though they loved and pitied, they could not assist. The old man wept as he told me all this, mingling his narrative with exhortations to me to have patience, and not to hazard my destruction by going to the castle, where he assured me it was impossible I could see my father, and where it was certain I should meet my own death; for there could be no doubt but that my brother thirsted after my life, and that the only reason I had hitherto escaped enquiry was, that the great Count believed me already dead!

And this was a brother!—a man born of the same parents! one who could scarcely recollect me otherwise than as an infant, and whom I never could have offended. Gracious God! is it possible that passions thou hast implanted can thus pervert the human heart?—oh no! it is the abuse of those passions, from the conventions, the prejudices of society, that thus deform the heart of man, and stifle all the genuine propensities of his nature. It was ambition, avarice, and lust of power, that had made the Count what he was, a parricide, and the murderer of his father and his brother; yet he had no son, none for whose advantage he was urged to these crimes, and it had long been understood that he was estranged from his married brother by some difference in political opinion: the other of my father's sons was employed in negotiating some military business in England, but had he been at Vienna as well as the second, I had no reason to believe either
of

of them would resent my injuries, or assist me to revenge them, for their jealousy of my favour with my father was equal to the Count's, and they had treated *me* in the very little communication they had held with him with malignant disdain: yet, on reflecting on all the circumstances of my present condition, it seemed as if the atrocity of my eldest brother would be so disgraceful to his family, that it must revolt the other two; and I determined, after I had made an attempt to speak to my father, to seek my beloved Gertrude; endeavour to bid her adieu for ever with fortitude, for I could not now expect, beggar as I was, ever to call her mine, and then to go to Vienna, and if my brother repulsed me to attempt laying my case before the Emperor, who surely must have been deceived when he authorised the measures the Count had taken, and sent his military to enforce them.

But this plan, rational as it appeared, and as I endeavoured to represent it to

Hans, did not preclude me from another, in which vengeance rather than reason dictated—I desired above all other things to find myself in the presence of this brother. Infamous as his conduct had been towards me, I shuddered at the thoughts of staining my soul with his blood; yet called upon to revenge, and if possible to relieve my father, I felt that the ties *he* had broken I ought not to remember, and that in setting my life against his, I should either lose what he had made a burthen to me, or rid the world of a parricide and a monster.

Having once formed my resolution, I endeavoured to calm my mind, that I might regain strength enough to execute it. In four or five days after I had left my wretched bed, and had accustomed myself to the air, I thought myself capable of beginning this perilous exploit. Fourteen days had gone by since Hans had rescued me from the hazard of perishing in the woods, and being devoured by the

the animals formerly the objects of my sport.

I insisted on the old man's leaving me on the preceding night, and told him that all the service he could then do me would be to keep my secret, and wait till he heard better tidings of me. I had nothing to give him in reward of all his services but the little money I had about me and my watch—he refused to take any thing, and was so hurt at my believing he would accept of such a recompence, that I desisted from pressing it. I assured him he should soon hear of me, and that whatever might be my fortunes, I should always consider him as the preserver of my life—we then parted.

Before the dawn of the following day I left this temporary shelter, and took my way towards the house of my ancestors, but my appearance was so changed, that I did not expect to be known there even if any of its former inhabitants had met me. My hair was cut off, and my head

bound up in linen, and covered with a peasant's wolf-skin cap. The hunting-dress I usually wore I had exchanged with Graaf for a coarse working jacket; my face was pale and ghastly, and my feeble steps were supported by a stick. Unarmed and defenceless, I thus intended to put myself in the power of my brother by demanding to see him; and reproaching him with his inhumanity, to call upon him as a cavalier, as a gentleman, to give me satisfaction. This last resolution, however, I had adopted as I walked, for my intention in exchanging my clothes had been to try to obtain, while unknown, admission into the castle, for whatever precautions had been taken against such intrusion, I believed I could counteract. On more mature reflection, however, I rejected this plan as degrading, and unworthy of me. I scorned to enter in any other character than my own the house of my father; and as for the humble and forlorn appearance I made, it was for him
to

to blush who had reduced me to it, by aiming at my life.

When I approached the house it was about nine o'clock. I walked round the outward wall, and looked towards the apartments over the terrace, which had been named to me as those inhabited by my father. All the windows that I could see were shut. Immediately behind the house was a steep acivity, up a part of which the garden enclosure ran, and from among the trees that grew there and hung over the wall, might be discerned a great part of the garden and the old irregular buildings of that side of the house which looked into it. I was strongly tempted to try if I could not get over this wall by the assistance of the boughs. In my boyish days I had often done it in sport; it could not, I thought, be very difficult now. What was to become of me afterwards, I staid not to consider; but having mounted a tree, though by no means with my former activity, I let myself down with ease

case on the other side, and directed my way to a door, which would let me into the apartments immediately under my father's. After what I had heard, I was surprised to meet no one at this door. I opened it, and passed through the lower rooms ; they appeared to be deserted. I ascended the stair case, and still met no one. Though I saw arms lay in a window seat, and belts and accoutrements belonging to soldiers, as if it had been a casern ; of course I expected to meet the persons to whom these belonged ; but through the four large rooms that led to my father's, I passed without seeing an human being. The weather was warm, for it was early summer, and these doors were all open. I saw that the door of the last room was also open, and I trembled least in entering I should find only the inanimate corpse of him whom I sought, and at that moment I forgot the strange appearance I made. I was capable of thinking only of my father. I stopped, and I breathed with difficulty ;
there

there was a slight noise in the room, and a little French spaniel, of which the old Count had long been fond, came running towards me. She jumped around me, barked, licked my hands, and shewed those signs of joy with which that faithful and sensible animal the dog, expresses its pleasure at the sight of a person to whom it is attached. I stepped forward, Mimi bounding before me ; I was in the room, I saw my father, and in another step I was in his arms. He knew me, changed and disfigured as I was ; or rather he thought it the ghost of his lamented Leopold, and overcome with variety of emotions, he sunk in a fainting fit, and without my support would have fallen on the floor. So long did he continue in this state, that I imagined he was gone for ever. He opened his eyes ; I spoke to him, and conjured him to recollect himself, and tell me what I could do to prevent our being again divided. He seemed to exert all his remaining strength, and with great difficulty
I learned,

learned, that his eldest son had taken possession of every thing, and had deprived him, under pretence of his having fallen into a state of mental imbecility, of all power over his vassals or his estate; and having possessed himself of all the property he had saved, and taken away all the deeds and writings that were of any importance, he had departed that morning, leaving a sort of steward besides the man he found there in that station, and who had always been in his interest, with a guard to prevent any person's interfering to restore him to his rights. "And you, my Leopold," said the venerable unhappy man, "they have driven you from your father; you were the object of their abhorrence, only because you were deservedly dear to me. But wherefore so altered? what has befallen you? why this squalid dress, and these pale and haggard looks?"

To tell him what had already happened to me, was, I thought, to destroy him, and by so cruel a shock to dismiss the little
remains

remains of life which but faintly animated his frame. Instead, therefore, of answering his questions about myself, I besought him not to think of me, but to tell me whether there were any means left of our escaping together. "Let but your injuries be known, my dearest father," cried I, "and they will instantly be redressed; every feeling heart, every brave arm, will be enlisted in your service."—"Ah Leopold," replied he, "indulge not, my son, these visionary hopes; remain not here—your life—Oh! I am but too well convinced your life will not be safe; fly then Leopold, fly these fatal walls, and let me live still in you! Heaven abandons me in my old age; it will to your merit be more indulgent. Why should I wish to live to experience the bitterness of dependence on my ungrateful sons, and to see them persecute thee? I will not curse them, I Leopold; no, I do not wish to curse them but on thy account, unfortunate boy! I can with difficulty forbear. Hark! did

not

not I hear these keepers coming who are set over me? Yes! They have taken advantage of the first hour of their Lord's absence, to give way to indulgences which his presence restrained, and they have staid unusually long at their meal; but they return, they approach. Fly Leopold; try to escape their notice, or you will, like me, be a prisoner." I had no hesitation in determining not to fly. "No, my father," cried I, embracing his knees as I knelt before him, "it is for me you have suffered this unnatural treatment; your tenderness for me has excited the brutal rage of my cruel brother, and now I once more see you, force only, the last compulsion, shall tear me from you." There was no time for him to contend longer against this resolution, for the persons he spoke of were already in the room.

Cowardice is always the accompaniment of guilt. These ruffians, furious and armed as they were, trembled and turned pale at the sight of a pallid looking and defenceless young

young man prostrate in anguish before an injured father. They were strangers to my person, but soon learned who I was. I really believe that, prepossessed with a notion of my death, and not being able to comprehend how I came thither, the superstition of their country for a moment predominated and unnerved their arms. I spoke, and they recovered of their terror, and both together advancing towards me, were about to seize me, when snatching up the iron with which the fire in the stoves are fed, and which, as my father had still fire in his room of a night, was the only thing within my reach; I told them, that whoever attempted to touch me, should feel that I had still life and strength enough left to prevent my being so disgraced.

The noise however that all this made, brought three of their associates into the room. I was soon overpowered, rather however by the sight of my father's agonies, than by their numbers. I enjoined him

him to keep up his resolution, to remember that heaven would avenge a father's injuries, and to be in no pain for my life, which I knew they dared not touch. I then suffered two of them to go with me to the door, the principal remaining with my father; and I own I was not without hope that I could make some impression on these men. They however answered nothing to the arguments I used, but led me in silence into a room, formerly used as a prison for delinquents on the extensive feudal territories belonging to the castle. There they waited with me till he who had the chief direction appeared. They then left me with him, and when I looked on his countenance, I had indeed much less hope of being heard.

This man was cool and plausible, and his features expressed villany and cunning. He rather affected humility, and in answer to my loud and haughty interrogatories as to the right by which they detained me, or imprisoned the Lord of that mansion, he

he began an elaborate defence of *his* Lord's proceedings, to which I would not attempt to listen. However, my curiosity was in some degree awakened, when in answer to my reproaching him as being one of the assassins commissioned by my brother to murder me, he protested with a solemn air, that no injury whatever had been intended me; that the Count had merely ordered me to be denied admittance, and did not even now know what had been whispered among the persons that guarded the house, that I had been struck by a soldier on the head on my attempting to cut him down with a hanger, and he and his comrade believing me dead, and frightened at having so much exceeded their orders, had carried me into a wood, and laid me near a bye-path, where they hoped I might be supposed to have fallen by other hands.

Though I did not believe this story, I saw that some advantage might be made
of

of it. I demanded therefore to be restored, first to the privilege of seeing my father, and then to liberty. The man declared his own readiness to do this, but lamented that the solemn oath he had taken to be faithful to his employer, put it out of his power till he had received his directions, for which he assured me he was about instantly to dispatch a messenger. He left me, carefully securing the door, and I saw him no more; but in an hour afterwards two men with pistols in their girdles, whose appearance marked them as fit for any mischief, brought me in some food and wine. They were as silent as mutes, only when I desired that if I was to stay there all night, I might have a bed, they replied that they had directions to bring one. It was evident that I was now a prisoner, and I was to make up my mind to remain so at least till the pleasure of the great Count should be known. Good God! what were then my reflections! Here in the very house where

Gertrude was e'er now to have been mine, I was a miserable captive. And what could she think of my disappearance? Perhaps my real situation, and the change that had happened at Zolna being unknown to her, she might be conjecturing what could have kept me from her, and be tormenting herself with the idea of having so unworthily bestowed her affections upon one who could forget and neglect her. These and a thousand distracting ideas assailed me, while my apprehensions for the life of my father were equally overwhelming; under my present circumstances I seemed to be deprived of all power of assisting either the one or the other, and was probably condemned to linger out my useless and miserable days in prison.

The same men whom I had seen before brought me a bed, with whatever was necessary for my repose, and furnished me at the same time with a change of linen; and they supplied me also with supper, yet
were

were invincibly silent, and I imagined that such as mine might be the feelings of the wretched men who, born the collateral relations of the Turkish tyrant, are condemned to imprisonment and the bow-string.

At length my inflexible attendants left me. It was midnight. I listened to the striking of the great clock, which I had so often heard under circumstances how different ! But no other sound broke on the air, and the new inhabitants of the castle seemed to be sunk in profound repose. I then went round the chamber to try if my escape was by any means to be effected ; but I well knew, that if precautions had been taken to secure the doors, which there was no reason to doubt, there was no possibility of my getting out. The windows were near the roof, at least fifteen feet above my head, and the wall, which was plaistered, inclined inward ; nor was there any means of getting up to the windows, as there was nothing in the room but a single chair, and the bed
on

on the ground. I tried the doors in vain—they were originally strengthened with pieces of iron, and these had recently been replaced, where, from neglect, they had been suffered to fall; so that the fastenings were stronger than when the place had been destined, in remote and more barbarous times, to the confinement of malefactors; or those who, in the feudal system, were adjudged to be such. These doors opened inward; and no strength that I could apply had the smallest effect in moving them. Here then I was to remain—here I was perhaps to die. More than two hours passed in imagining contrivances to escape, but they failed as soon as they were suggested; my mind was chained as well as my person, and the most agonizing reflections prevented my eluding my miseries by transient forgetfulness. All these dreadful sensations were new to me; never till this miserable hour had I contended with adversity; and I had known sorrow only

in the relation of others, which I had for the most part the power to relieve.

It were needless to dwell on this scene of despair—excess of fatigue overcame, at least partially, the wretchedness of my mind; yet incapable of forgetting myself, I dozed rather than slept, when I fancied I heard some person softly unlocking and unbarring the door on the other side. I started up, listened, and perceived it more distinctly: the person seemed unwilling to awaken me, for very deliberately and slowly the fastenings were removed, and the door opened. I looked towards it, and expected to see some man enter who was commissioned to murder me; I beheld, however, instead of an assassin, a female figure—she bore a lamp in her hand, and with slow and trembling steps approached me—I knew it to be a young woman called Theresa, the daughter of the steward Graab. I expressed surprise to see her; and could not help exclaiming that I expected a very different visitor. Teresa tried

tried to smile—"Ah! Count Leopold," said the soft-hearted girl, "how sad a place is this for you!—and how greatly do I dread that—"

"Tell me," said I, "my friendly Theresa, what I have to fear?"

"Every thing," replied she; "at least I cannot help putting the worst construction on what I hear and see going on, though my father"—She hesitated, as if unwilling to proceed.

"And where is your father?" said I.

"He is in the house," replied the interesting girl; "but ah! Count Leopold, you cannot be ignorant that he has never been your friend; and he has always, I know, held a correspondence with your elder brothers—but every body, Sir," continued she, a faint blush stealing over her pallid cheek, "is not of my father's mind, and I wish—perhaps—"

"Perhaps!" cried I, eagerly seizing her hand—"Perhaps, sweet Theresa, you can assist me to escape from hence?—yet

for the world I would not distress you by embroiling you with your father"—

"I came" said she, appearing to acquire new courage as she spoke—"I came, Count Leopold, determined to risk every thing to save you from the peril you are in—but there is not a moment to lose. Will you suffer me to be the means of shewing the gratitude to your family which my father directs so differently—will you follow me?"

"Will I, my amiable Theresa?—Yes, surely—and my heart will always acknowledge my benefactress."

"I tremble so much," said she, "that I shall be unable to conduct you if I do not go directly. Come, I beseech you—another moment, and all may be lost."

Theresa then again opened the door by which she had entered; it led up a narrow flight of steps, terminated in a stone gallery, where there was another door equally strong. I assisted to open it, for it was very heavy, and intreated her,

as

as we paused there a moment, to tell me if what she was doing through kindness to me might not be injurious to herself.—“Your father,” said I, “perhaps will ill treat you, for your part in it cannot surely be concealed.” At that moment a gust of wind rushing with violence along the passage, forced the heavy door from her feeble hands as we passed through it, and it shut with a loud noise that echoed throughout the whole building—“Hasten for heaven’s sake,” cried she—“hasten, or I shall have hazarded all this in vain. The alarm is given!—oh! waste not a minute.” I followed, or rather supported her along through two or other passages, and at length to a door which led from without to that part of the house where her father’s offices were. Breathless with haste and terror, she could scarce assist me to open it—scarce find voice to conjure me in a whisper to hasten and conceal myself in the woods. To have lingered while I declared my gratitude, would not have served

my generous protectress; and she animated my speed by saying—"If you would save your father, fly."

I was instantly in a sort of court, separated only by a paling from the grounds around the castle, and immediately sprang away towards the woods, with every path and inequality of which I was well acquainted. Concealed amid the thickest of my paternal shades, I stopped to regain my breath and recollection. I listened—there was no sound brought by the wind from the now hostile walls I had left. I hoped my generous conductress had returned to her own apartment; then astonished to find I had so suddenly regained my liberty, I paused to consider the use I should make of it.

To find Gertrude, relate what had thus forcibly divided us, and bid her a last farewell, was what most immediately occupied my thoughts: then, too, another reason occurred why I should hasten to Ronlitz—Ebendorf, who had himself felt the

the heavy hand of persecution, would surely be eager to exert himself in behalf of his suffering friend ; he would interfere to mitigate the harshness of his confinement, perhaps go farther, and enable me to avenge it.

These considerations determined me to bend my steps thither. The summer night, clear, and with a brisk wind, was favourable to my intentions: I walked on as alertly as my weakness, which I now again felt, allowed me. I had soon left Zolna some miles behind ; but at the dawn of day I was still among the mountain forests, and still at a great distance not only from Ronlitz, but from any habitation of man. The refreshment I had taken in my prison enabled me still to persevere. I passed among the deep defiles of these stupendous hills ; and as they grew more aspiring and rugged, the torrents which were formed by the snows that crowned them, though they sometimes impeded my passage, refreshed me

with their cool waters. The chesnuts and other wild fruits were not yet ripe, but I somewhat appeased my hunger by a species of mushroom that I gathered growing about the roots of the beech trees.

At length the shades that had hitherto sheltered me ceased; I still knew nearly the tract it was necessary to observe, having so frequently hunted in this country that no part of it within forty miles was unknown to me, but I had taken a way for the convenience of keeping among the woods, which considerably lengthened my passage to Ronlitz; and I believed I was still at least five leagues from it, and assuredly could not reach it till the following day. I followed therefore the course of one of those mountain torrents I had before crossed, believing it would lead me to some cottage of the herdsmen, who at certain seasons drive their cattle to browse among the long lines of heathy and rough land that run

up

up midway these Alpine heights. I found, after walking till I was nearly exhausted, such an hut ; but it was then without any inhabitant. There was very little to satisfy my hunger ; a few roots and coarse cheese seemed to form the sole sustenance of the humble occupier of this lone abode. The stream that ran brawling before it, however, afforded me drink, and I took without scruple what there was to eat ; then, exhausted with fatigue, I threw myself on a mat covered with dried fern and sheep-skins, which served the mountaineer for a bed, and, despite of all that I had suffered and all I feared, sleep befriended me for many hours. I was then suddenly awakened by the entrance of my host with his dogs : he expressed a great deal of surprise at seeing me, and accosted me with less hospitality than I expected ; but when I calculated upon his civility I forgot the figure I made ; and that I was no longer Count Leopold, who was received with pleasure and respect when-

ever chance led him into the cabin of a peasant; and I was at first shocked by the rudeness with which he accosted and enquired of me, in a language as rough as his appearance, what I did there? Not naturally inhuman, however, the savageness of his aspect and manner disappeared when I told him that I was a dependent of Count Sommerfeldt's, of whom he had heard, though his temporary residence was more than twenty miles from Zolna; he had heard too the character of the great Count, and his compassion was excited when he learned that I had been driven from Zolna by his means. I thought it not safe to entrust him with my real name, but gave him to understand that I was not, poor as my appearance might be, destitute of money to satisfy him for the food I had taken. To that he seemed indifferent, and with genuine, though coarse hospitality, produced a somewhat better repast of dried-beef and rye-bread. He was not entirely without

without his luxuries; a fermented liquor, made of the tops of the spruce fir, and nearly resembling what I have heard is a common drink in America, supplied, and not badly, the place of beer. I partook of his meal, and then informed him that I had friends at Ronlitz, to whom, in my present distress, it was my intention to apply; but feared I had deviated very much from the road thither. It was an inexpressible relief to me to learn that I was not above three hours easy walking from the place where I desired to be. He inhabited, he said, with his wife and children, a village not more than a league and an half from Ronlitz, and he would shew me a way over the mountains which would bring me thither before night-fall. I would have paid him for his assistance as well as his hospitality, but he would accept nothing; and yielding to my eager solicitation to set forward, he consented to go, though he had passed the preceding night on the hills with his herds, and did

not intend returning thither till the following day.

We began our walk then. I felt myself refreshed by food and repose, and was so impatient to reach Ronlitz, that for some time I seemed not to feel the ground. My friendly herdsman carried me through woody hollows and over rugged points, by paths which I should not have found without his assistance. The way was rather laborious than long, and at length, as the sun was declining, we reached the bare summit of one of the highest ridges of mountain rock, and in the valley under it I saw Ronlitz. The attendance of my rustic guide then became unnecessary: he was impatient to return to his business—I was equally desirous to be left alone, and we parted.

When he was gone, my thoughts, which had till then been in some degree dissipated by the speed and difficulties of our march, returned with an undescribable complication of sentiments to the scene

I was

I was about to enter upon. I saw beneath me its windows blazing with the bright reflected rays of the setting sun, the house that contained Gertrude. The object of my fondest hopes was there, lovely as when we last parted, but the hope that then animated my existence was lost, crushed for ever, and I was now to see her only to bid her and happiness an eternal farewell.

“How if she should scorn me, drive me from her with contempt? Could my reason resist such a shock? But it was impossible Gertrude could be so cruel. No, she would soothe me with that tenderness which I had seen her on several occasions shew towards the wretched; she would weep over me. Once more I should press her to my heart; the delicious tears with which love had once filled her soft eyes, would now fall in pity of the wretched Leopold’s misfortunes; they would shed balm on my wounded heart, and give me courage to bid her
farewell:

farewell. Oh no! I could not bear her compassion; it would drive me to madness. I could not see her tears, I could not see her now with the dreadful idea of its being the last time. I could not hear her voice confirm our eternal separation. It would be better, far better to die, than expose myself to encounter this insupportable, this exquisite misery." Such were my confused thoughts, and I became breathless and giddy through the force of these contending sensations; I was obliged to sit down on the edge of the precipice, to recover myself sufficiently to reach the vale. The day was now closing; the last rays of the sun half shadowed by rosy clouds, were reflected on the lake of Ronlitz, which spread its tranquil mirror almost four leagues to the west. "There, even there on the banks of that water, where not a month since we were walking together, and with her arm within mine, were indulging dreams of future felicity. There she perhaps is now wandering

dering alone; there perhaps she is trying to conquer by reason the unfortunate affection she bore me, and meditating how to return to her own country, and forget the wretched man to whom she can never be united. I will see her however," cried I, starting up in a state of mind, not at that moment very remote from frenzy; "I will see her; oh! it were comparative happiness to die at her feet. But my father! Shall I forsake my poor imprisoned father, and to escape anguish myself fly from the last duty I have to fulfil!"

To think longer would only be to aggravate my torments. I therefore rushed down the precipice, and was very soon at the outward gate of Ronlitz Castle. I entered the first court, the second was surrounded by a deep fosse, filled with the living waters of a stream which flowed from thence into the lake. I crossed the bridge, somewhat surprised at the unusual solitude of the place; I approached the principal door where a servant was usually
in

in waiting; no one appeared; I opened it, and crossed the great hall; still I met nobody. I was more and more astonished; what could it mean? There was a light burning at the extremity of the hall; it was in a room where the lords and farmers were received, and sometimes entertained, according to the feudal customs of that part of Hungary. The steward usually sat there. The door was open, I went in, and I saw by a solitary candle, with astonishment that seemed to deprive me for a moment of my faculties, that the places where papers and deeds were usually deposited, were sealed up with the Emperor's arms, in such a manner as I had heard it was usual to affix seals to the confiscated property of persons under sentence of banishment or proscription.

What was I to believe from this alarming circumstance, and the deserted state of the house? Where was the baron, his daughter, and Gertrude? These questions I now hastened to ask of the ser-

vants,

vants, for some were surely to be found about the offices; I listened, and thought I heard the sounds of boisterous mirth. Totally forgetting that these people, if any remained who had lived with the Baron, would not know me, and incapable of attending to any thing that related to my own safety, I hurried to the place from whence the sound proceeded. I found there five or six soldiers, men who exactly resembled those whom I had seen in possession of Zolna. There were women among them. I was in the midst of them before they noticed me; one of them then started up, and asking me what the devil I did there, pushed me rudely back, and refused to hear me. I resisted such insolence, absolutely unconscious that my appearance authorised these savages to treat me with indignity. A shout of cruel contempt echoed from the brutal group, and three of the men falling upon me at once, gave me several blows, and forced me violently back towards the moat, into
which

which it appeared to be their design to precipitate me ; but they contented themselves with thrusting me out at the gates of the Court beyond it, which they barred after them, leaving me bruised and bleeding on the ground. My blood boiled with fury and indignation in vain ; scarce could I keep myself from rushing on destruction by demanding admittance, and exposing my life to the cowardly violence of this despicable rabble ; but an apprehension suddenly struck me that unnerved my soul, and left me susceptible only of terror. Was it not possible, was it not even probable, that Gertrude, deprived of the protection of the Baron, to whom undoubtedly some misfortune had happened, might be yet within those walls, exposed to the brutal insults of ruffians, on whom I could not think without feeling all the horrors of impotent rage. Had I long yielded my mind to these images, I should have been seized with raging madness, but they were too acute to be endured
without

without an effort to relieve myself. I rose not without some personal pain from the injurious treatment I had received, and staggered to the village, a few scattered cottages on the banks of the lake. It had some time been quite dark. The water alone was still lighted by the relicts of fading day, and its waves broke with a low rippling murmur against the shore. Gertrude in our very last walk had listened with me to the same soothing sound. Almighty God, from what had I fallen! I dared not think, but hastening forward hoped to meet some peasant returning late, who could tell me what had befallen the Baron, and where were the former inhabitants of Ronlitz. The same ruin that had fallen on Zolna, seemed to have extended hither its fatal influence. I approached the village huts, the humble owners of their families were already gone to rest. I called, but no one answered me. I beat against the doors, and for windows there were none within my reach, a rude

hole

hole in the roof serving for that purpose. Still no reply. I began to believe that the same calamity that had overwhelmed the lord of the soil, had swept away its labourers in one common ruin. Almost exhausted by agony of mind, I turned towards the broad expanse of water, hardly dimpled by the night breeze. The tranquillity of every thing around me, and the tumult of my agonizing mind, was strikingly contrasted. I walked, no longer quite conscious of my design, along the margin of the lake, and felt disposed to bury my anguish in its calm bosom. Then becoming giddy and sick, I threw myself among some reeds and osiers, and fixing my eyes on the water, now almost as obscure as the surrounding objects, I continued to gaze without any fixed intention, and in that confusion of thought which nearly approaches delirium.

So bewildered were my ideas, that I have no clear recollection of how long I remained there, when at a considerable distance

distance I saw a pale light move slowly along the surface of the water. It seemed at first a delusion, yet I still watched it, and among the small aits, that dotted the lake, the reedy coverts of swans, and other water fowls, I now saw it glide, and now disappear. I listened, I believed I heard the dashing of oars, and at length a small boat with two men it it approached the place where I lay. They were peasants, who had been out to fish, and were coming on shore to deposit with their families the produce of their night's labour. Suddenly I spoke to them, and their alarm at such an unexpected salutation having a little subsided, I besought them to inform me what had happened to the Baron their lord, who were in possession of his house, and what was become of his family?

These men supposed from my appearance that I was one of their own class, and they saw that I was scarce able to support myself, or to utter the enquiries I so eagerly demanded to have answered. With all the

urbanity of unsophisticated nature, they took me with them into their cottage, and invited me to share what they had, but seemed unwilling to answer my questions. My importunity was only redoubled by their reluctance. At last the elder of them said: "Ah friend! it is not safe even for poor men as we are to speak all we think; no, nor even all we know. Things were otherwise once with Hungarian men."

"But Baron Ebendorf," cried I, eagerly interrupting him; "tell me, I conjure you, where he is, where is his family?"

"At Vienna," replied the peasant; "but exactly where, I am afraid nobody can tell; not in his own house. He is, poor old gentleman, in some prison or other, and there it is most likely he will end his life. We are *villeins* of the Emperor now; the Baron our ancient lord's estates are all forfeited!"

"Forfeited! he himself a prisoner; and his daughter and the young English lady, her friend, where are they?"

"None

"None can tell," replied the man. "An order, as it is called, came down with twenty soldiers to make it good; the Baron was put into one close carriage, and the young Baroness and the stranger lady into another, and away they were all sent guarded in the middle of the night. The servants were not suffered to speak to them, but were all dismissed the next day, and other soldiers arrived and took possession of the castle, and they say have sealed up all the best of the goods, but very little is known. We only have been given to understand that we have changed masters, and that Ronlitz and all about it belong to the Emperor."

However painful this account was, I was relieved by knowing that Gertrude was removed with her protector. I determined to follow her to Vienna, see her, and then let fate do what it would with me, unless I could find that by dedicating to him the remainder of my wretched life, I could mitigate the sorrows of my father.

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It was easier however to resolve, than to execute my resolution of going to Vienna. I was so overcome by anguish of mind and bodily pain, that the benevolent countrymen were moved with compassion. Their good offices were redoubled when they knew, all I thought proper to tell them, that I had belonged to the Count Sommerfeldt, who had undergone the same fate as the Baron, whose humanity and kindness being known to me, I had intended to seek shelter with him when compelled to leave Zolna. These honest and charitable men would not suffer me to depart till I appeared better able to sustain the fatigue of such a journey. They told me that if I would remain with them three days, they would carry me in their boat to the other extremity of the lake, which would save me a walk of eleven versts, and that from thence I might gain the road leading from Clomkioz to Aldensheim, where some kind of conveyance might occasionally be found

found to help me on my way. To this proposal I agreed.

By the assistance of these peasants, I was carried about fourteen English miles by water, and then found a man who travelled with cutlery goods about the country; and agreeing with him for a small sum, reached Sarnlitz, from whence it was not difficult to proceed, by various humble conveyances, to Vienna. There I arrived in a state altogether unlike that in which I had once before entered it; so unlike, indeed, that it was impossible those to whom I was known then, should recollect me now. To some of them, however, it was necessary I should reveal myself; and my first care was to alter, as much as I could, that appearance of squalid wretchedness, which would preclude me from entering their doors. This I effected by the expenditure of almost all I had in my pocket. Strange vicissitude of fortune! To this was a man reduced who had never till then known the slightest

pecuniary inconvenience: the bitter cup of adversity was now at my lips, and I was to drain it to the dregs!

Equipped in such apparel as, though humble, would not, I thought, make me liable to be driven away by the domestics of those to whom I should apply, I presented myself at the house of the bishop of Aulnsberg. He had been my father's friend, though of a different religion; he was not very distantly related to my mother, and had professed a particular friendship for me, though I had been educated on principles he could not approve. I imagined that, by his means, I should most easily learn what had befallen the baron, and how to gain access to him, or, at least, to discover where his daughter and her friend had taken shelter. All the persons about the house of this reverend man appeared to be priests of different orders and degrees. I informed the first who would listen to me, that I was a person who had occasion for the bishop's advice.

vice. He imagined it was of spiritual advice I spoke, and offered to hear me himself, surveying me, however, with a look which signified that either myself or my dress was very little to his taste. I persisted, notwithstanding, in my demand of being introduced to his Eminence (he was a prelate of the highest rank, and possessed of an immense revenue). His Eminence was engaged in some holy occupation, from which he could, on no account, be disturbed. As I knew not whither, if not to him, I could repair for the information I desired, I resolved, however repugnant to all my feelings, to wait in the anti room, where I soon saw assembled a number of persons, who appeared to be one degree above common mendicants. They were attending to receive a charitable dole, which his Eminence, attended by his almoner, distributed thus publicly once a week. There was an ostentation in this which might, however, be overlooked, for the sake of the good it

did; but I should have honoured my cousin more, if his benevolence had been more private. At length, after one of the most painful hours I ever passed, (for my thoughts were at liberty to dwell on the extent of my own misery, and to guess at the miseries of those by whom I was surrounded,) the bishop entered. Till then I had never had an opportunity of seeing how dependence and want debase man, and make him abjectly tremble before his fellow-creature! I had seen poverty among the peasants of our mountains, but it was the poverty of honest industry—of the hardy inheritor of his father's plough, who, labouring the soil on which human sustenance depends, feels that, as long as his health and strength last, he is independent, and that he has a right to be supported in his age. But these poor emaciated and pallid creatures, born where inordinate luxury is the creation and the contrast of the most squalid poverty, seemed to have lost all the honest pride which

which makes man conscious of his place in the world, and they were willing to wait on the being who had the power to relieve their wants with the meanest adulation.

When this ceremony was over, I stepped forward, in a manner which would better have become what I had been, than what I was. The bishop retired a step, as in amazement, and said, "Young man, what is thy demand?" "To speak to your Eminence alone," replied I. "And what is thy business with his Eminence?" enquired the almoner (a fat monk, who now posted himself between us). "I shall tell that to his Eminence himself," replied I. Then addressing myself again to him, "Do you not know me, sir?" said I: "you were once well acquainted with your relation, Leopold de Sommerfeldt." He repeated the name, in a hesitating and faltering voice, adding, "Art thou he?" Without, however, waiting for my answer, and as if he feared it might produce an explanation,

nation, which he was willing to avoid before so many witnesses, he bade the almoner conduct me to an apartment, whither he would follow. I had some doubts whether he would not find some pretence for eluding an interview, which, it was easy to see, was not pleasant to him. However, he soon made his appearance, followed by another ecclesiastic. He waved his hand to them both, the almoner having remained in the room till then, and they retired.

When we were alone, the bishop remained silent, as if he was uncertain what to say. I began the conversation by asking him, whether he knew what had happened at Zolna? and whether he was informed of the measures Count Volgeth had taken to possess himself of his father's estates, before the succession was open to him by the common course of nature?—There was no occasion for his Eminence's verbal answer; his countenance convinced me that he was well apprised of what Volgeth had done; yet judging, from my manner
and

and appearance, that I was not, however injured and dejected, of a humour to suffer insult without resentment and resistance, he appeared unwilling to enter into any discussion. But it was not my intention that he should evade it. Our dialogue became somewhat sharp; I was compelled to tell him I did not call upon him for advice, either spiritual or temporal, but for information-as to the fate of Ebendorf, of whose crime I supposed he was acquainted, and could probably tell me where he was confined: "it is my purpose," said I, "to see him." "To see him!" exclaimed the bishop: "to see a state prisoner! Rash young man! would'st thou rush to thine own destruction? Take my advice, inconsiderate youth! Think not of applying for any such permission; it will not be granted. Rather determine to submit yourself as your circumstances and the laws of nature dictate, to your elder brother. Consider what he has done in taking proper care of

your worthy but superannuated father, as his duty ; and blefs the happy interposition that has saved you from a marriage so ruinous, and so unworthy of you, as that which your own headstrong passions, and the imbecility of your poor father's intellects, had nearly engaged you in :'' when, in a moment, my mind ran over all I had suffered ; the brutal cruelty with which I had been driven from my father's house ; the ignominious treatment I had received on returning to it ; and now found that the unnatural tyrant who had effected all this, had gloried in disappointing my marriage ; the storm of passion which assailed me was so little to be governed, that, had the mighty emperor himself been present, and perpetual imprisonment, or instant death, the consequence of my yielding to it, I should have spoken and acted as I did. My violence of language brought the priests into the room ; their attempts to appease me by canting exhortations, served only to inflame me the more ; till,

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at length, I burst from them, and, rushing into the street, enquired wildly of the first man I met for the house of Count Volgeth, for thither it was, at that moment, my determined purpose to go; and had I been able to execute it, I do not know what would have followed; probably my miseries would have been shortened. It happened, however, that the man to whom I applied myself was a stranger, and could give me no information. I ran with rapidity towards that quarter of the town where persons of Volgeth's description reside. To those who saw me, who heard my incoherent enquiries, I must have had the appearance of a madman. I inspired terror rather than pity; the greater part of the persons to whom I addressed myself, fled from me. At length I was in the immediate neighbourhood of the emperor's residence, and some one who had followed me from the other side of the town, pointed me out to the guard as a dangerous, and certainly insane person. I

I was surrounded by soldiers, seized, and confined in the guard-house.

A young officer, to whom the serjeant made his report, came to enquire about me as soon as the guard was relieved. The agitation of my spirits had a little subsided; I was able to speak rationally, and to state that I was a native of Hungary, who, having received an irreparable injury in his own person, and in those of friends most dear to him, had come to Vienna to seek the aggressor, and say, *Thus didst thou*. The manner in which I spoke ill accorded with my appearance. The young lieutenant, who was about my own age, felt an interest for one who was evidently unhappy, and a stranger. He thought it worth while to question me farther, but the place we were in was unfit for it. He released me, therefore, from the custody of the soldiers, and, as soon as it was in his power to leave the post, followed me to his lodgings, where he had requested me to wait for him.

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There was about this young man that indescribable something so easy to talk of, and so difficult to define, which at once attracts and gives confidence. Do not think it strange if I say that I felt it towards you, sir, even in our short conversation; when we met so lately in the forest of Erlentob; when, assuredly, you could entertain no favourable opinion of me; and I approached you prepared rather for an hostile answer to my enquiries than such as I received. Indeed, I thought it probable, before I spoke, that you might be a very different person.

To proceed, however, in my narrative.

From the young officer, (lieutenant Willsburg,) I concealed nothing. He heard me with the most friendly interest; yet it was easy to see that he was under great apprehensions for my safety. He told me that the power of Volneth was such as made it very unsafe for any one to oppose him. That very thing had been kept so secret relative to the unfortunate

baron Ebendorf, that it was known only to a few that he had been arrested and brought prisoner to Vienna; but what had since been his fate, or that of his family, no one knew. My new friend, however, entering deeply into my distresses, and, above all, that which related to the uncertainty I was in about Gertrude, insisted on my sharing his lodgings: there, he said, I should be safe from the enquiries which, it was highly probable, might follow my indiscreet visit to the bishop, who was in the interest, and might, indeed, be called a creature of Volgeth's. I accepted his offered kindness; for he was one to whom I felt it no disgrace to be obliged. The obligation was, indeed, redoubled, when he undertook, on condition that I would consult my own security by remaining perdue, to enquire what was become of the imprisoned baron. The crime, he told me, imputed to that unfortunate man, was intriguing with the enemies of his country, and having carried

on,

on, clandestinely, an intercourse with persons in France and in England. Of such machinations I was very sure my old friend was so perfectly innocent, that it appeared extraordinary they should occur to any one as ground of accusation; and I could not but believe that the stroke was aimed through him at me, and that his other enemies about the Emperor would have been content with his exile to Ronlitz, if Volneth's determination to ruin me, and to wound me where I was most vulnerable, had not urged him to renew some accusations, no matter how unfounded, against the poor old Baron. In removing him from Ronlitz, he also guarded against his interference at Zolna, in behalf of his ancient friend. These reflections made me consider myself as the cause of the more decided ruin of Eberndorf, and of his daughter; and it was but too probable that in theirs, that of Gertrude might be involved, and that, an English woman, unprotected as she was, might,

might, when a correspondence with the English was in question, be sent to some remote prison, where I might never hear of her more.

I was now, as the unhappy, who have keen feelings and lively imaginations, generally are, ingenious in tormenting myself. A thousand apprehensions for the personal safety of Gertrude arose in my mind, and were as quickly driven away by other conjectures and fears of a still darker complexion. The indefatigable kindness of Williburg was my only resource: he passed in enquiries all the time he could spare from the duties of his profession, and at night related to me the result, still trying to appease my encreasing anxiety, and still finding new reasons why he hoped for better success the following day.

It was less difficult to gain intelligence of what was passing at Zolna. There I heard that the great Count affected to make no secret of the means he had taken
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to secure, in his own hands, the government of property, which was finally to be his; that he made a parade of kindness to his father, denying him nothing but the liberty of again receiving those who had; he said, taken impious advantage of the feebleness of age, to appropriate his fortune, and involve him in fatal connections. Volgeth had haughtily declared, that feeling *his* privilege as the head of the family, to direct it, whether in private, political, or religious concerns, he should long since have availed himself of the right of primogeniture, and have devoted me to the ecclesiastical profession, to which my birth seemed to destine me, had he not weakly forborne, in consideration of the simple infatuation of a doating old man. He had never, he said, intended me any injury; but it had been his purpose to make me take the tonsure, and he would still do so if I could be found; for, as I was not yet major, I was in his power, and that power he could no other way use

use for my advantage, temporal or eternal.

There is not, among all the vices and crimes of men, any thing so revolting as hypocrisy. The wretch who daringly violated every moral principle, who outraged every human tie, shrouded his infamy in the garb of religion ! while my indignant heart swelled with fruitless indignation. I had no means of avenging these insupportable, these complicated injuries ; for there was no doubt that if Volgeth discovered me, perpetual imprisonment would be my lot ; and it was only by the error of the centinels on the night I returned to Zolna, added to their ferocity, which rudely repulsed, instead of seizing me, that I had not then fallen as a prisoner into his power. When, by the pity of Theresa, I was again delivered from him, his fury had known no bounds ; and that I was not detained in my ill-judged visit to the Bishop, was owing to the fear which my violence gave him ;
that

that some disagreeable event might happen from it under his roof, together with his having no doubt that I should be easily traced, and easily secured.

My poor father, the victim of the ambition of one of his sons, and his fondness for the other, was said to be sinking into the grave. To the most humane among his attendants, he complained of the cruelty of depriving him of his Leopold; earnestly entreated them to tell him what was become of me; and often began, with his trembling hands, letters to his eldest sons, remonstrating, though gently, on their harsh conduct towards me, and offering, if they would secure to me only a part of what he had, by his own œconomy, accumulated, I should retire to another country, and give up every claim to the residue of his estate. For me, who had so long been the object of his thoughts, they were now, while life was fading fast away, still anxiously employed; and the mildness with which he bore the tyranny
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of Volgeth, (who never personally appeared at Zolna,) the patience and goodness of heart of this venerable man, affected even those who were paid for keeping him in custody in his own house: but the moment they discovered any symptoms of compassion to Graab, the former steward, who, having been the most ungrateful towards his former master, was now the most inveterately his enemy and mine, other persons, of a different description, were placed about him, instead of those whom he had inspired with pity. But these did not fail, on returning to Vienna, to exclaim against their late employers, and utter, as loudly as they dared, their sentiments of Volneth.

Imagine, sir, what were my feelings when I heard all this! Sometimes I suffered paroxysms of agonizing passion; and I am ashamed to recollect, however natural it was to be so affected, those starts of frenzy, in which, execrating my existence, and the hour that gave me birth,

birth, I should have attempted to escape from it, had not Willisburg taken precautions against the wildness of my despair, and, with the most patient pity, soothed my distraction by naming Gertrude, and asking me if I would, to escape from temporary evils, abandon her to misfortune in a strange land. Her name; the tender remembrance of my father, whom I was sometimes persuaded I should see again; the generous sympathy of my friend then recalled me to reason, but its reign was short. I looked around me for comfort in vain; I saw no cure for the evils which surrounded me; it was more probable they would be increased than alleviated. Whatever I could do was rather likely to make them incurable than lessen their weight. I sunk into despondence, mingled sometimes with a degree of misanthropy, which made me abhor my species, and dread to hear the sound of an human voice. I shrunk even from that of my excellent, my compassionate friend, who
had

had one of the best hearts in the world: but he spoke to me with so much kindness, and such just reason, that at length he recalled me to a sense of what I owed to his disinterested friendship. From the gloomy and disgusting views of human nature, he bade me turn my eyes towards instances of genuine virtue;—in poor old faithful Hans, who had risked his own safety to preserve my life; in the fidelity of his son and daughter; in the hazardous undertaking of the soft-hearted Theresa, and the rustic attention of the herdsman and the peasants, without whom I could never have escaped my pursuers, or reached Vienna. “It is, then,” I would answer, “the corruptions and the conventions of polished life that vitiate the human mind; it is the form of government under which he lives, that debases the heart of man; and those most remote from its influence are the least liable to these unnatural sophistications. Oh that I were in a desert, where I might hear no voice but that
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of Gertrude!—that we might together minister to the comforts of him, who has sacrificed all for me. But you, my incomparable friend! you—Willsburg—you have been raised in this atmosphere of intrigue and deceit, of ambition and luxury, yet you have still an heart for pity—an heart equally generous and brave.”

In this state of mind I continued near a fortnight, when Willsburg returned one morning, and told me he thought he had discovered where the Baron was imprisoned; and he had reason to believe that his family were near him. Every hazard I ran, by appearing at Vienna, was now forgotten in my eagerness to accompany him to a place where he imagined Gertrude and her protectors were to be found. In the mountainous village of Meiffan there is an old fortress, now converted into a state prison. It was there that Eberdorf, as my friend's intelligence now assured me, was confined; and there I resolved

solved to seek him. Willsburg seeing me determined, and knowing all the dangers to which I should be exposed, generously resolved to accompany me. He obtained leave of absence, and, disguising me like his servant, we set out together, and soon found ourselves at Meissen. Had not he been more prudent than I was, all these precautions would soon have been rendered vain; for my impetuosity, and the questions I should have asked, would undoubtedly have betrayed me. My friend, however, managed so well, that, without exposing ourselves to any particular suspicion, we soon learned that Ebendorf was in the fortress, and had been under much closer confinement than that which he now suffered; because, in consequence of his having been dangerously ill, he had, by the interposition of the governor of the prison, obtained permission to have his daughters visit him. Such was the account we received; and by the word "daughters," I easily understood

stood that it was Gertrude and her friend. The hope, therefore, I now entertained of seeing her again, in health and safety, made me almost forget my own situation, and the prudence with which I ought to proceed.

Willsburg still acted as my guardian-angel. It is, indeed, fit I should check every tendency to misanthropy myself, and endeavour to cure it in others, when I remember what a friend I have met with in him. I, who deserved so little, and was so rash, so headlong, so incapable of governing my passions—who still feel the errors I have been saved from, yet am ready to err again. Too happy should I have been if only myself had been involved in the calamities which it has been my lot to endure.

As Willsburg's stay with me could be only of ten or twelve days, he lost not a moment in pursuing his generous plan of leaving me in security, under the influence of Ulrica and Gertrude, to whom
only

only he proposed making me known. He was acquainted with the military man to whom this place of confinement for state prisoners was given in charge; but he dared not hazard recommending me to him; and, after some consideration, as his avoiding the presence of the governor would have an awkward appearance, Willsburg determined to say he was at Meissan, for the benefit of drinking the water of Ledenich, a small village at the foot of the mountains, only a quarter of a league from Meissan, and that he had brought a sick servant with him, to whom they had been recommended as the only means of cure. This was an admirable expedient to prevent all suspicion and enquiry; for my countenance was so haggard and pale, from the effects of my recent sufferings, that none would have known me who had only seen me as the young and happy Leopold de Sommerfeldt.

Willsburg had expressed to the woman at whose house we had taken up our abode,

that he had a curiosity to see the young ladies, daughters of a state prisoner, who were said so piously to attend on their father. This appeared natural enough; the woman was a gossip, a description of persons to be met with in all ranks and all countries; and she was flattered in being heard and allowed to tell her lodger all she knew. She therefore began a very long account of every body in the village, and would have told more of those in the fortress had she known more: but she could only inform us that the old nobleman was a great lord, who, to be sure, must have displeased his royal Majesty, the Emperor, or he would never have been there; and so close a prisoner was he, when first he came, that nobody saw him, and even the young ladies, his daughters, were never allowed to go near him, though they lived in a poor cottage, just by. But of late, since he was sick and likely to die, they had admission to him; "and now," said the good old woman, "you may see

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them, poor ladies ! just as it may be about this time, going every day up to the fort together, unless it be sometimes when one of them is not able to go ; because she is in such bad health, that every now and then she cannot walk so far. Every body pities them, to be sure."

Animated as my hopes had been, they were now suddenly and cruelly depressed. I imagined that Gertrude was she whose health was declining, and that I should meet only to lose her—as if I had not assured myself repeatedly, that, to me, she was already lost. Such, however, was the emotion I betrayed, that Willsburg gave me hastily some commission to execute, to prevent the woman from remarking it. Instead of retiring to appease the tumult of my spirits, I ran towards the path along which, I had understood, from the woman's description, the ladies passed in their way to the prison. It led me out of the village, down a solitary lane, formed by a rocky hollow. There, not ten paces

before me, I saw them : but my breath, and almost my recollection, failed me. I dared not look at them steadily ; for one of them, as it was easy to see, from her manner of walking, was so weak as to make the support of the other necessary ; and they were so near of an height, that I could not, till their veiled faces were visible, distinguish which was the sufferer. In a short time, however, I perceived, by her air, as she approached within a few paces of me, that it was Gertrude—the angelic Gertrude ! more lovely, a thousand times, than when surrounded by the advantages of affluence ! who was supporting and soothing the unfortunate Ulrica. Thus occupied, she did not notice, she did not even appear to see me. I leaned, as if to make way for them, under an hollow part of the rock. She was then so close to me, that I heard the delicious accents of her voice : she spoke cheerfully ; an heavenly smile, not the smile of joy, but of tenderness and pity, played about her

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lovely

lovely mouth, as she tried to inspire her dejected friend with confidence. "We shall find the Baron," said she, "in better spirits, my Ulrica, than you are; try, I beseech you, to meet him with a look of hope; you know the influence your countenance has upon him!" I could forbear no longer: advancing one step towards her, I laid my hand on the arm she had at liberty, and pronounced her name—"Gertrude! Have you forgotten me, Gertrude?"—She looked at me with astonishment, but knew me instantly, notwithstanding the change in my appearance, and threw herself into my arms.

It was then Ulrica's turn to advise. The imprudence of such a meeting, within fifty yards of the village, where the soldiers who were guarding the fort were always on the alert, and where the conduct of those who were admitted to see the prisoners was under continual scrutiny, was incontrovertible. Her gentle remonstrances were not, however, uttered in

vain : I was conscious of the danger I had incurred, and desisted from speaking to them, otherwise than as would appear, if we were observed, consistent with my apparent station. They walked on—I followed—all mutually dreading lest our first meeting might have been remarked ; but it was fortunately the hour of relieving guard, and those whom we had most reason to dread were engaged on the platform of the fort. There was hazard, however, as Ulrica assured me, in my being seen to follow them, though under the appearance of a servant ; for they were strictly enjoined not to converse with any person, or to mention their names, or that of the prisoner, who, on these conditions only, they were suffered to see ; a permission which, Ulrica assured me, would be withdrawn, should they be observed to notice me. While she said this, Gertrude seemed incapable of uttering a word ; but her expressive eyes, turned towards me, told me what passed in her heart—that heart which

I discovered, with transports inexpressible, was still mine ! Fortune then had not deprived me of every thing ; the most invaluable treasure was left me ; and I, for a moment, set at nought the malice of my destiny.

Alas ! I forgot, in that intoxicating moment, that I must again lose sight of her—that when I next saw, I dared not speak to her, dared not ask her to relate how she had borne our separation, and what she had thought of the unhappy Leopold, who was now, but for that cruel separation, to have been her husband ! It would have alleviated and rendered my torments supportable, had I only been allowed to have seen her, only to have followed her steps even at a distance ; but this was denied me ; and Ulrica conjured me, in a low voice, not to hazard the ruin of her father, as well as theirs and my own, by attempting it. I felt the force of the injunction, and was compelled to obey, without being able to fix with them on
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any safe means of seeing them the next day.

I returned to Willsburg in a state of mind which made him tremble for my intellects. As soon as, by listening to his calmer reason, I became somewhat more rational, I related to him what had passed; and he saw at once that all his friendship had undertaken, might be, in a moment, rendered not only abortive, but of the most fatal consequence, both to me, to my friend, and to those who had engaged to serve me. My impetuosity, and the tumult of my mind, which he knew how to pity and excuse, were not, however, very friendly to reflection. He besought me to leave him a moment, that he might consider what was to be done; and after he had remained some little time alone, I saw him go out.

His visit was to the commandant. As *he* could not be a suspected person, and as he promised the greatest discretion, he obtained leave of this officer to make

ance with the two ladies, having passed his honour, as he informed me on his return, that he would neither enquire their names, or ask any questions about the prisoner; but desired merely, during his short stay, to have occasionally the permission of conversing with two amiable young women, who seemed entitled, from their misfortunes and appearance, to the respect of every man. The commandant rallied him upon his gallantry, and, in a gay and unsuspicious humour, gave him the liberty he desired.

Since reflection and experience have made me understand mankind better than I did then, I have been astonished at the conduct of Willsburg. The zeal with which he undertook, on so short an acquaintance, to render me services which the nearest relationship, or longest intimacy, would not have induced many men to engage in; his patient endurance of my intemperate sallies; and the watchful kindness which he exerted to preserve me from

from myself, were instances of such generosity and friendship as few men, perhaps, have met with during longer lives than mine. Yet he was a German, and of a nation I had been early taught to dislike—of a nation of which the character is supposed to be exactly opposite to that of the Hungarian. But goodness of heart and of understanding is peculiar to no country, though very rare in all.

Alas! my incomparable friend is now no more. War, that scourge of humanity, deprived the world of that excellent young soldier in the early bloom of manhood; and to his memory only I can be grateful.

When Willsburg informed me, on his return, of the permission I received, I saw not how it was to facilitate the interviews for which my heart languished; but, after two days, the commandant, who seemed perfectly persuaded of his discretion, and whose orders from Vienna, in regard to his unfortunate prisoner, Ebendorf, were

no longer so rigourously enforced, withdrew great part of the conditions which he made with Willsburg, or, at least, signified to him that he should not insist on his never attending the fair recluses to their lodgings, or shewing them other little attentions. In consequence of this, Willsburg took occasion to send me, who still was considered as his servant, with trifling presents of fruit and game. One day he had just received a new romance from Vienna; at another time, desired their corrections of a view he had drawn. Thus, Earnst, which was now my name, had continual opportunities of seeing them. Ah, sir! think what I felt in these interviews: but it is impossible; nor can any idea I endeavour to convey, enable you to imagine what passed in my heart.

The Baron, from the account I had of him, had never recovered the illness which, some weeks after his imprisonment, had reduced him to the brink of the grave. It was a paralytic stroke; and his intellects

lects were so much injured, that he was frequently childish, and sunk in the most humiliating, though unconscious wretchedness. Unable to look with fortitude on this sad spectacle, without hope of seeing the end of her father's captivity, and dreading, because another long interval of silence had occurred, the dereliction of her lover, Ulrica was so miserable, that her constitution, never very strong, was visibly declining: a slow fever preyed on her frame; and she made no effort to resist the progress of a decay she felt and rejoiced in; desiring only not to survive her father, and solicitous to know that her lover, to whom she was still fondly attached, would lament her, and that Gertrude would be safely restored to her friends in England. Such was the state of this dear unhappy group when I first saw them. I thought of its deplorable counterpart—the scene at Zolna! I considered the unjust exertion of tyranny, by which all this misery was inflicted; and I enquired what there

was in power that hardens the heart of man, and not only makes him insensible to the sufferings of his fellow beings, but gives him a strange pleasure in rendering them miserable !

Oh ! how impossible it is, by any form of words, to convey an idea to another of what has passed in the mind ! How can I communicate the sensations, so complicated and so acute as those that I then felt ! yet I was ashamed of betraying it, even to her who was in possession of my heart, and to whom its weaknesses were but too visible ; for I contemplated in *her*, in a young and delicate woman, a degree of fortitude, courage, and tenderness which excited my astonishment, while it added a kind of sublime admiration to the fondest love that ever was inspired by a deserving object.

Gertrude was the sole support of her unhappy friend, and the father of that friend. Careless of her own health, and devoted solely to the duties of friendship and gratitude, she divided her care between the
father

father and the daughter : when Ulrica was too ill to go up to the fortress, which now often happened, and when they were together, she was, by her mild cheerfulness, her unremitting, yet quiet attention, the solace and dependance of both. The poor old man, when at any time a slight degree of reason and strength returned, besought her not to abandon his daughter when he should be no more. Ulrica, who every day felt her strength lessening, implored her to stay with her father, and be to him as the daughter whom he was about to lose. Sometimes she remained all night by the bed-side of the poor prisoner ; for he was now frequently in a state that made it uncertain whether he would live till the following day ; then, with the dawn of the morning, returned, for a few moments, to the anxious Ulrica, endeavouring to cheer her spirits, to fortify her mind, and sometimes, with a pious fraud, attempt to excite hope which she felt not herself.

Angelic

Angelic girl!—formed as thou wert, to enjoy and to confer happiness, wherefore has thy lot been so sad a one? yet had it been fortunate, those virtues that now raise thee above humanity would never have been called forth.

Such as I have just now described, was the task this beloved creature was engaged in when we met after the dreadful events that had torn her from me. If, in her adversity, I found reason to adore her more passionately than ever, change of fortune had not decreased her affection for me. She scrupled not to own that she had never ceased to think of me as the husband of her affections—as one who would, she hoped, have been her guardian, her protector, her friend. “Ah! Leopold,” said she, “whenever I could, without unkindness to my unhappy friends, steal away for a few moments, it was then your poor Gertrude felt her own miseries, and gave way to the weakness of shedding unavailing

ing tears; and remembering the sad contrast between what I was and what I hoped to have been, I called on you, who could no longer hear me. My thoughts would have followed you—but whither? Ignorant of your destiny, I was bewildered in the most dreadful conjectures. Our departure, as prisoners, from Ronlitz, happened on the second evening after you had left us, and only one before that when we were to have followed you to Zolna. So closely were we confined till we were conducted to this place, that I was sure every attempt of yours to gain admittance to us would be abortive: yet I was certain you would make such attempts; and one of my most alarming apprehensions was, lest you should, in doing so, involve yourself in the supposed guilt, (for real guilt there was none,) of the friend whom you could not relieve. “*On n’est jamais si heureuse ni si mal heureuse qu’on pense,*” you remember, is one of Rochefaucauld’s maxims, which, however, is not true. I was

very

very unhappy, Leopold, in being divided from you, and in witnessing the calamities of my excellent friends ; yet I did not know half my miseries, in not knowing that you were even a greater sufferer, and from the hand of a brother !”

With the prolixity, as well as the passion of a lover, I could now repeat every word that, during our short and secret interviews, was uttered by this incomparable young woman ; but were I to trespass so much on your patience, another night would be necessary to finish my narrative, for I have yet much to say. I pass, therefore, over ten days, during which time the Baron, though his intellects seemed to be in some degree recovered, became every hour more evidently drawing towards the close of his unmerited misfortunes. Willsburg, ever alive to pity, heard, with the deepest concern, of the condition of this venerable and unfortunate old man ; but to pity would have availed nothing ; he set himself in earnest to mitigate, as far as was possible, the
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the misery he deplored ; and by this time the commandant's friendship for him was so much improved, that he considered him as one of his family, and therefore made no scruple to grant his request, and admit him to the room where Baron Ebendorf was confined. As it was to gratify me, as well as his own humanity, that Willsburg had obtained this permission, I was ordered, as his servant, to follow him, because I might be of use. It had been agreed, between Gertrude, Willsburg, and me, that whatever opportunity might be afforded us, I should not be made known in my own character to the Baron ; for we apprehended that the emotion which the sight of me might occasion, would dismiss the spirit from its shattered tenement.

Willsburg had already sent him offers of service, and had obtained for him, through his influence with the commandant, the best accommodations, of every kind, that such a place afforded.

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The interview was to take place in consequence of a message sent by the Baron, in answer to the friendly offers Willsburg had made. "Tell the generous stranger," said the dying prisoner, "that it will be soothing to the last hours of the injured and unfortunate Ebendorf, if he be allowed to declare his innocence to another honourable man, who will corroborate the declaration I have made to the worthy governor; and, perhaps, my memory may, by their means, be exculpated, and my estates restored to my family. So shall Ulrica be saved from the indigence I fear for her, and have the power to pay some little part, at least, of the debt of gratitude we owe to that blessed young woman who has been our great support in this severe affliction.

The scene to which I was now introduced, would have moved the most insensible heart. You may imagine, then, how it affected me. I saw the old friend of my father, a man resembling him in years as
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in fortune, ending in a prison a long life, of which the greater part had been spent in the service of his sovereign. Whatever had been the errors of Ebendorf, they were undoubtedly of the head, rather than the heart. He had, with ambition to the aims of which his talents were unequal, undertaken to transact business, difficult in itself, and requiring, from the characters of the persons with whom he was to transact it, political cunning, which he did not possess. He had been overreached. His enemies, or those who wished to possess the places he held, had taken advantage of this; and what had been merely the effect of pliability and imbecility of mind, had been imputed to disaffection, and to the remains of those ancient prejudices in regard to Hungarian privileges, to which his family, as well as mine, had been formerly attached. But I now knew enough to know these allegations against him were not solely the occasion of his present unhappy situation. It was, I was well assured,

fured, his unfortunate connection with me that had precipitated him into a deeper abyss; and he now lay a victim to the connections of his friends, as well as to the malice of his enemies: both had contributed to his ruin; and I seemed to be more than half guilty of having occasioned the calamity I witnessed. I could not sustain the emotions I felt, without discovering myself. Prudence, to which I never was apt to listen, had, in such a moment, no chance of being heard. Ebendorf knew me—but hardly could he say that he did, and faintly attempt to recommend his weeping and agonized daughter to my protection, before he was deprived of speech; and, in a few moments afterwards, he died.

Again I was indebted to the precautions of Willsburg, or my own unguarded rashness would have so far betrayed me, that I should have been imprisoned myself: it would, indeed, have been part of the commandant's duty to imprison me; and
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I should not only have involved my friend, to whom I was so much obliged, but have been rendered incapable of giving such protection as a being so desolate as I was could afford to the unhappy daughter of Ebendorf and her angelic friend.

I could dwell with a melancholy remembrance, not wholly devoid of pleasure, on the few following days. They were occupied, by Gertrude, in attendance on her poor friend ; and by me, in sometimes seizing a moment to conjure her not wholly to forget, in her own health, the last and dearest blessing I had on earth. I saw her with the noblest fortitude support the failing spirits and exhausted frame of Ulrica, while she was herself uncertain of her fate, and knew not how to return to her own country, nor by what means she should live even the little time she might be permitted to remain in Germany ; for I now learned that great part of the money which had supported the latter days of the Baron, had

been supplied by her, from the three hundred pounds sent by her father to make the purchases necessary for her marriage.

I observed, for several days, that Willsburg's manner was greatly changed. He was still generous and considerate, still acting the part of the best and sincerest of friends, and as much alive as ever to my interest, and that of the two lovely mourners; but some secret uneasiness seemed to prey on his mind. His leave of absence had expired; without my solicitation he had got it renewed, and appeared to intend remaining in the exercise of the same exalted friendship till the event of Ulrica's illness should be known. Sometimes, in our long conferences, he asked me what were my intentions for the future. One day he said, "Your brother seems to have forgotten his projects of piety and persecution; or otherwise he might easily have discovered you in your concealment. Perhaps he may have been touched with remorse, and may no longer meditate mischief

chief against you." "Remorse!" replied I; "alas! my good friend, did you ever hear that a man of his sort ever felt remorse? A statesman, and ashamed of having oppressed an inferior to gratify his ambition! No; there is, be assured, no hope of that: he has ruined, and therefore may be content to let me escape with life, knowing that his being my brother saves him from my personal vengeance, and that I cannot obtain any other; for the poor are always in the wrong; and who is there would take the part of a destitute younger brother, against Count Volgeth. The provision made for me was comparatively trifling; and who will undertake to demand it of him? No, my dear friend, there is nothing to be hoped for from his contrition; nor do I imagine his vengeance sleeps. For me, no other part seems to remain than to draw my sword as a mercenary: the world, unhappily enough, is at this moment in arms; war seems likely to rage through-

throughout Europe ; I must earn my bread with my sword."

"And Gertrude," said Willsburg, "what, my dear Leopold, will you do with her?"

"I would conduct her into her own country," replied I, mournfully ; "put her into the protection of her father, and take leave of her for ever : but even this project, which, while I executed it as a duty, would render me the most wretched of men ; even this project I have not the means to carry into effect."

Willsburg seemed desirous of saying something, yet not to have the courage : he turned from me abruptly, and I hardly saw him during the rest of the day. When I did, he was silent and dejected. A dread, for which I could hardly account, prevented me from asking him what thus affected him ; and it was not difficult to see that he evaded giving me an opportunity.

On the following morning, however, he seemed to seek what he had before shunned.

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He followed me into a wood, where he knew we were not likely to be interrupted. I saw, and hastened to join him. His countenance expressed the disturbed state of his mind; and his voice was tremulous while he thus spoke:—

“Sommerfeldt, I have delayed too long the painful explanation I am now about to make:—I must leave you.”

“Leave me!” cried I: “my friend, will you leave me?—what have I done?—how have I forfeited your kindness?”

“It is nothing that you have done,” said he, “that compels me to take this resolution: I have trusted foolishly to my own strength: I have rashly relied on my own philosophy. They have failed. I love Gertrude; I love her to an excess which my reason and my friendship for you will combat in vain. I must go:—in staying I shall violate every tie of friendship and honour. In a word, calm and even prudent as I have appeared to you,

"I know myself too well ; and I dare not stay. Tell me, then, briefly, what I can do for your service ; and let us part before your friend becomes your most cruel enemy !"

Painful as had been some of the moments of my life, this seemed the most terrible I had ever passed. Of all the evils that could fall upon me, this which now threatened me was the most dreadful. I dare not even now attempt to analyse the mingled agonies of my mind. Nor can I repeat the expressions that it extorted from me. The generous heart of Willsburg was affected by the condition he saw me in ; and assuring me that he was determined to relieve me from his presence, he hastily left me.

I remained speechless and breathless. The image of Gertrude in the arms of another, made me incapable of reflection, till all my obligations to Willsburg, his generous disinterested friendship, his persevering humanity, returned to my recollection,

lection, and I reproached myself as a monster of ingratitude.

I threw myself on the 'ground in a state of mind not to be described by words. I endeavoured, however, to recall my senses, and to reason with myself. But what has reason to do with the conflicting passions which tore my bosom? After my first separation from Gertrude, I had persuaded myself that I could resign the dear hope of being her husband, since I could not bear to involve her in my fallen fortunes. I had even lately talked of conducting her to England, and placing her in the protection of her father: but now, that the idea of her ever belonging to another was suddenly presented to me, I found it so insupportable, that it seemed likely to drive me to phrenzy: yet what hope had I, beggar as I was, of being able to support her? Proscribed, and in hourly danger of being dragged away, how was I to protect her—I, who had no asylum for myself, who escaped imprisonment only by ap-

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pearing

pearing as a servant, and existed only by the bounty of a man who was, till within a few weeks, unknown to me? What, then, had I to hope?—how could I, destitute as I was, conduct her to England?—how, indeed, could I remain near her when Willsburg was gone?

What did generosity and true affection demand of me? Willsburg was, though a subaltern, in affluent circumstances; his future expectations, or rather certainties, were great; for he was the heir of a maternal uncle, who had immense property. With Willsburg, therefore, who, to the advantages of fortune, added so much goodness of heart and understanding, Gertrude would be happy. I ought to relinquish her. There was but one way of doing it;—it was by my death; for I never could live and know that she was another's.

To die, therefore, I resolved. My life, while it was insupportable to myself, was an obstacle to the welfare of the woman

man I loved; and to nobody was it useful. My father—my poor unhappy father, then seemed to ask me, whether I had forgotten the debt I owed to gratitude and to nature? But did he still live? Should I not rather aggravate than mitigate his sufferings if he did, by attempting to see him? Yet it was cowardly to shrink thus, while there possibly was one duty so sacred unfulfilled.—This is but a feeble attempt to convey an idea of the tumult of my mind. Reflection served only to distract me. The noble effort to which I would fain have persuaded myself I could aspire, was beyond my strength: I could find resolution to die, but not to survive the loss of Gertrude.

From indulging this dreadful contention of opposite passions, I was, after some time, roused by the approach of someone among the trees that surrounded the place where I had thrown myself. I arose hastily:—it was Gertrude herself!

"My friend," said she, in that soothing voice that had always, till now, had the power to calm and tranquillize me: "My dear friend, why do you, at such a time absent yourself? Ah! why are you not with us to help us to comfort our poor Ulrica?" I was incapable of answering. "For heaven's sake," continued Gertrude, as I leaned my head in anguish against a tree,— "for mercy's sake do not alarm me thus. What has happened? Willsburg seems strangely uneasy—he is going to leave us—this admirable friend—Willsburg, to whom—."

A deep groan, which I could not repress, interrupted her. Her astonishment was redoubled when I repeated the name of Willsburg. She now enquired whether any dispute had arisen between us; but in her eager solicitude, headlong and frantic jealousy, which I now felt, for the first time, and felt in all its horrors, made me think she was anxious rather for Willsburg than for me. Assuming, therefore,

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an apparent calmness—Good God, that my tongue could utter it!—I sternly bade her go to Willsburg, whose fate was better worth enquiring into than mine! Then, shocked at the effect a manner and words so unusual had on her, I resolved at once to know whether she was already acquainted with Willsburg's passion for her; and fixing my eyes on her face, "Gertrude," said I, "you are not ignorant of my meaning—Willsburg loves you—he has just declared it to me. *He* deserves you; *he* is affluent; he can place you in the rank you were born to fill. With me, whose unhappy attachment has assisted to bring you and your friends into distress, what but calamity will follow you? I am an outcast, a poor abandoned and undone wretch! Oh! be you happier than I can make you; and fly the contagion of my misery!"

"Never!" replied the charming heroic girl. "Never, Leopold, will I desert you. Is it possible you could think so ill of me as to believe I would? Were

what you say of Willsburg true, highly as I esteem him, and were he able to offer me the most splendid rank, trust me, Leopold, I should never have a thought of him but as your friend—as the friend of him whom I still consider as my husband, and from whom no change of circumstances, no poverty, shall divide me, while he still loves me!”

You may imagine that, by such a declaration, all my elevated projects of heroism were put to flight. I now neither envied nor was angry at Willsburg. I felt that he was an object of pity; and fearing that I had treated him injuriously, I would have flown to him, have humbled myself before him, and implored his forgiveness.

Gertrude, however, who thought me in no condition to go to such an interview, besought me to calm my spirits rather than seek new occasion for inflaming them.

“I will not remain with you,” said she; “for it is, on many accounts, unsafe; but if ever I had any influence over your heart, let

Let me conjure you to remain alone till your reason, my dear Leopold, has conquered this ebullition of passion. If our friend has unhappily entertained sentiments inconsistent with his friendship, he will, I am sure, repress and drive them from his mind for ever, when he is assured by myself, that the ties that bind me to you are, in my eyes, as sacred as if the ceremony had passed: and this, if it be necessary, I will say to him."

By such a creature who would not be implicitly governed? I prostrated myself on the ground before her, and committed so many extravagant actions in assuring her of my submission, that she became more doubtful than before of the propriety of leaving me. But at length, seeing me a little more calm, she desired me to wait for her where I was; "for I have, already," said she, "been too long absent from my dear Ulrica, whose situation grows every day more alarming. I came, little imagining I should find you in such a state of

K 5

mind,

mind, to consult you on the possibility of obtaining some intelligence of the fate of Colonel Deltheim. Ulrica is actually dying of a broken heart: it will soon be, if it be not already, too late to save her: but since she has heard, by means of the woman where we lodge, who has a nephew in the same regiment, that there has been another engagement in Flanders, where the Austrians have severely suffered, she is persuaded that her lover is no more; and the cruel anxiety that tears her heart is worse, at least it seems more insupportable, than even the certainty of his death."

By thus turning my thoughts, for a moment, to the sufferings of others, Gertrude endeavoured to lessen the emotion our conversation had excited; and having, in some degree, produced this effect, she left me, promising to return.

Her stay was not long. When she appeared, I saw that something had happened still more to affect her. She gave me a paper—"It is from Willsburg," said she:

she: "Willsburg has left us: he went while I was absent with you."

My hands trembled as I took the letter, which I was hardly able to open. It contained a short but friendly farewell; an exhortation not to expose myself to future persecution by rashness, but to be guided by my better angel; and a request that, as a last testimony of my friendship, I would apply to the use of my two fair friends, what he enclosed, and remove them, as soon as I could, from their present situation, to one where we might all be in greater safety. "I have," added this generous young man, "taken such precaution with my friend, the governor, that he will suffer you to remain as if in attendance on the two ladies, to whom I have told him that I have consigned you, while they continue in their present dejected and desolate situation. Somerfeldt, who would not envy such a servitude!"—There were enclosed notes on the Bank at Vienna to the amount of two hundred

K. 6

pounds!

pounds!—No man who has not had such proofs of exalted friendship, and who saw himself divided from his benefactor by such a circumstance as that which had compelled mine to leave me, can judge of what I felt.

The money I considered as a sacred deposit, by which I hoped to have the power of saving, from personal distress, the unhappy Ulrica. It was, however, some time before I was tranquil enough to listen to the regulations for our future government that Gertrude proposed; I acknowledged their propriety as soon as I understood them; and promised to be guided wholly by her. I was to remain where Willsburg had lodged, still passing for his servant, lent to his friends, on whom I was to attend occasionally, till the Baroness Ulrica was able to be removed. The Commandant, interested in her favour by Willsburg, gave her and her friend every indulgence in his power; but, within a few days after the death of

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the Baron, he had, as was, I suppose, his duty, written to Vienna to know the pleasure of the minister as to this young woman. It was understood, that the estates of Ebendorf having been seized, his daughter was left entirely dependant on the mercy of the government, which had, unheard, condemned her father to perish in prison.

The answer to this application the Commandant now waited for. Willsburg had undertaken to remind of it the Commissioners, or other persons, to whom the official part of this business was very probably left, and who, as nothing was to be got by it, thought—perhaps, no more about it. The generous friendship of Willsburg went farther. He determined to use his utmost interest, that, at least, a part of what Ebendorf had designed for the portion of his youngest daughter, might be restored. But it appeared to me, and to her tenderly watchful friend, that this last instance of his noble nature would be exerted

exerted in vain ; for that Ulrica would sink into the grave before it could be useful to her, even if it were successful.

Our apprehensions were but too well founded. Six weeks after she lost her father, Ulrica had a confirmation, by a public print, of the death of Colonel Deltheim. She had, till then, resisted, by some degree of courage, the progress of her illness ; and, at intervals, we had entertained hope that she would conquer it ; but when it was certain Deltheim was no more, the world appeared to be a scene of utter desolation, and she even deplored that her life, wretched as it was to herself, was a cruel and useless burthen on what she called the generous charity of Gertrude and Sommerfeldt, who, released from the trouble she gave them, might yet be happy. Daily growing more languid and weak, she appeared desirous of hastening the end of her sufferings, and it was only the tears and prayers of Gertrude that prevailed upon her to take any.

any nourishment. In such a state she could not long remain: she died, apparently without any other pain than that of quitting her incomparable friend, whose tears were shed over the unmarked grave, where we saw the daughter deposited by the side of her father.

Gertrude and I were then alone in a place where deep regret for our unhappy friends empoisoned the satisfaction of being together, and of living only for each other. There were many reasons why our stay there was dangerous for me; many others why it was improper for her. My first care, therefore, was, (still acting as Willsburg's servant, and on his account,) to pay every thing that was due from our unhappy friends; and the next, to consult with Gertrude on our removal.

With that fortitude and ingenuousness which gave value to her foster perfections, she met the difficulties of her present situation. It was not proper, it was not even possible for her to travel alone to England. I
could

could no otherwise be allowed to attend her than as her husband. Such, however, was my true affection for her, that I would take no advantage of her situation. I therefore represented to her the hopelessness of my condition; that I did not flatter myself I should ever recover the portion destined to me by my father, when I first aspired to the blessing of calling her mine; that I had only a heart which was more ardently and tenderly attached to her than when I had first sought her favour; but that if to devote my life to her would induce her to overlook all the disadvantages of uniting her fate with mine, I should not despair of being able to retrieve, in another country, at least in some degree, the effects of that injustice I had suffered in my own.

To this speech, which passion then rendered incoherent, Gertrude replied, that, considering herself bound to me by the most sacred ties of honour, and never having, for a moment, repented of having given me her affections, nothing should

now

now oblige her to quit me. "I am not, it is true, of that age," said she, "when the laws of England allow me to dispose of myself without the consent of my father; but his consent I have already obtained, and though change of circumstances might, perhaps, influence him; it ought not, it shall not affect my resolution."

I must have entirely changed my nature if any other voice than that of love had been heard after such a declaration from the woman I adored. As none were interested in our actions, we removed, unquestioned, from Meiffan, and, as soon as we entered the territory of another Government, I no longer appeared as a servant, and in a few days was the husband of the loveliest and most beloved of women. We had enough of money to carry us to her native island, and to support us there for a little time; and Gertrude seemed very sanguine as to her father's reception of us. We even ventured to imagine many means by which we might obtain a
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competence in England; and as I was not now personally in danger from my brother, and every place with her was to me a heaven upon earth, we should immediately have set out for that land of promise, if the uncertainty of my father's fate had not dragged me back to make a last attempt to execute towards him a duty, which, if it were unfulfilled, would have embittered my life, however prosperous, and destroyed my tranquillity in the bosom of happiness.

But how was this to be done? Innumerable, indeed, were the difficulties that, on every side, presented themselves. I must tread back much of the ground which had already been so fatal to me; I must expose myself anew to the cruel persecution of my unnatural brother; and I had no reason to think his vigilance in pursuing me would have abated by my long disappearance, had he thought me still living. I rather believed, that he imagined I had been compelled to enter into the army, and had perished among the innumerable others
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who had fallen since the period in which I had been so unwelcome a visitor to the Bishop; and this was the more probable, because Willsburg had taken care to have such an account of me whispered to those who would not fail to convey it to Count Volgeth, as that which would be most welcome to him.

Many difficulties, however, attended the attempt which I yet felt it my duty to make; but those difficulties I should have braved without hesitation, had they not involved the question, whether Gertrude should share them, or whether I should leave her, neither of which I could think of without insupportable uneasiness and apprehension. Far, however, from dissuading me from executing what she knew was necessary to my future peace, she made light of every objection that arose from my tenderness for her, and encouraged me to undertake the journey by declaring it was as necessary to her happiness as to mine, since she should never
forgive

forgive herself, if, by my fears for her, I omitted to obtain this last satisfaction. Many were the projects we now devised for passing in security, and at little expence, through so large a tract of the country. To appear as peasants, and furnish ourselves with merely such necessaries as that humble rank demanded, seemed the most likely to answer these purposes; but there was one very considerable hazard in it; levies were now making throughout Germany, and little attention was given to the will of those whose services were demanded. My age and height would probably make me appear so eligible to the dealers in human blood, that they would make no hesitation in compelling me to enter their lists: and should that happen, the circumstances in which Gertrude would be left were so appalling to my imagination, that I shrunk from that experiment, though I knew not what other to adopt.

At length we determined to alter our appearance as much as possible, to prevent
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our being known ; and to go first to Vienna, where I intended to apply to Willsburg, on whom I had still the firmest reliance. I thought that, however unequal his reason might be to combat his passion for Gertrude, while there was yet a possibility of obtaining her, that, with principles like his, he would learn to feel only tender friendship for the wife of his friend. I owed so much to him already, that I believed he would have a generous pleasure in increasing the obligation ; and on his prudence I relied for instructions in the best means of executing my journey to Zolna.

To Vienna, therefore, we proceeded, and arriving there without accident, took up our abode in the suburbs, where we called ourselves Wallachians, who were come to Vienna to obtain a legacy left us by a deceased relation. As my present appearance was altogether unlike that which I had borne in either of my former journies thither, I thought myself in little danger
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of detection. I went forth, therefore, without apprehension, and directed my steps to an house of public resort, which I knew Willsburg frequented. Under a pretence easily framed, I enquired for him: my disappointment and concern were extreme, to learn that he had, about ten days before, exchanged into a regiment in actual service in the north of Germany; and had joined it immediately. Thus faded the hope I had trusted to, of his advice, and even of his protection for Gertrude, had I been compelled to leave her while I went to Zolna; for such was my reliance on his honour and integrity, that I was sure he would, in such a case, have protected her as his sister. I was returning, discouraged and perplexed, to relate to her this unwelcome intelligence, when I was stopped in the street, and, not without alarm, heard myself called by my name. The person who accosted me I soon recognised to be George Graff, the son-in-law of my faithful Hans, and one
of

my preservers at the beginning of my distresses.

The honest man expressed his joy at seeing me still alive; "but, my dear young master," said he, "this is no safe place for you. Ah! sir, sad changes have fallen out: I am no longer gardener at Zolna; and Hans is quite worn down with trouble of one sort or other. My wife too—but, sir, I hope you will forgive me if I say you ought not to be here."—I enquired of him, then, whether he could point out a safer place for our conference; and he told me that he rented a small garden, three miles from the town, where he subsisted by raising vegetables, which he came every day to sell at Vienna; and there he could tell me all I wished to know. Having given me a direction to this place, we parted, and I promised to see him in the evening.

Gertrude lamented with me the absence of our incomparable friend. She forebore to say, though I doubted not that she thought

thought his unhappy passion had determined him to make this exchange. I was myself but too sure of it, and anticipated, in bitterness of heart, the fatal consequence; my fears were but too well founded. Even at the very time we had sought him at Vienna, and immediately on his arrival at the army, he fell :—the world lost one who was an honour to human nature. I have never ceased to consider this fatal event as occasioned by his friendship for me, which led him, so unfortunately for himself, to Meissen; and that idea aggravates my regret for his loss. I seem to be condemned to injure those who are attached to me, and to suffer, in their persons, more than in my own.

When evening drew on, I hastened alone to the habitation of Graff, and eagerly intreated him to tell me all that had happened at Zolna, and when he last saw or heard of the state of the old Count. The man looked at me with amazement, which soon subsided in concern. “ At Zolna !
 fir,”

“sir,” said he. “Do you not know, then, that the Count, your father, has been gone a great while?”

“Gone!” cried I, eagerly interrupting him: “how do you mean? Gone! is he dead then? Has that most unfeeling monster destroyed him?”

“Not yet,” replied Graff; “the Count still lives, but his recollection and understanding are quite lost and he is all the same as a child. Nobody knew why it was; but, on a sudden, Count Volgeth removed him from Zolna. He was not quite so feeble at that time, for those that were about him made, after a while, no scruple to talk to the few old servants that now and then, though they were dismissed from the house, ventured to ask about their good old master; and from them I heard, that sometimes the Count seemed to be sensible of the hardships they put upon him, and—”

Here I could not forbear again interrupting Graff—“Hardships!” exclaimed

It in a tone that made the honest fellow tremble, “dared they then to make my father suffer indignities, hardships——”

“Not in any thing else, sir,” said the man, “but in refusing him to see you, which he sometimes begged with tears in his eyes; and in not being allowed to manage his own affairs, or have the disposal of any money; for, as to all the rest, he was well enough taken care of. But people *did* say, that there were remarks made upon the Count by those that he had no mind should think he had done wrong; and so, for that reason, and because of the expence of keeping up the castle at Zolna, the great Count brought your father to an house he has had by here, on the river side: and every body at Zolna was dismissed, and all the pictures and best of the goods brought away. I have heard—but pray, sir, do not be so unhappy on that account, for what good will that do, you know—I have heard, since, that the Count, your brother, has been told

told that he ought to provide for you, and that his behaviour towards you has not been well thought of; so that he was desirous, as he gave out, of your returning, that people might know the stories that had gone about were not true; and for that purpose, and because he said he wished to do all that was brotherly by you, he caused you, as I have heard, to be searched after every where, till now lately, every body has said that Count Volgeth has been assured that you went into the army, and he has sent to find, if he can, what regiment you are in."

I listened to all this with various, but most painful sensations. "My father, then," said I, "is even now near me. I will see him once more, though certain death be the consequence. Tell me quickly, good Graff, which way must I go? I will attempt to-night! now this very moment I will attempt it!"

"Ah! sir," said this faithful fellow, "what purpose will it answer? My poor old

master will not know you—he knows no one, as Herman-Teiks, who often waits upon him, has told me. He sleeps best part of his time, and seems to have forgotten every body. Besides, sir, there be those that do not think Count Volgeth would have done as he did about you, if so soon afterwards he wished you well; and it has been told, by people about him, that he has been heard to say, he had rather the family should perish and be forgotten, than that your children, by an English woman and a stranger, should inherit the estates and honours. Indeed, sir, he has so much power, and has taken such pains to set the great people against you, that, if I might advise, it should be for you to avoid, above all things, putting yourself into his hands.”

I was grateful for Graff's advice, though I was determined not to follow it. I was, indeed, at that moment, incapable of hearing reason. Night was coming on; the idea most predominant in my mind

was

was, that, under its covert, I might, somehow or other, obtain admission to Count Sommerfeldt. Chance had befriended me once before : I might again be equally successful in reaching the apartment of the poor old man. Of my own safety I was careless ; I had obtained information enough to enable me to find the place ; and I went forward.

When I reached the house, I saw two or three servants within the court yard, the door of which was open. By the lights near them, I knew the livery to be that of Volgeth. Other servants, of the same appearance, came out and went in. Some men, who waited in the hall, spoke to them ; and they seemed to be playing and joking with each other. I knew none of them ; and I imagined they would as little know me, or believe that I had any other motive than curiosity for the enquiries I should make. I could form no plausible excuse, and therefore said, addressing myself to one of them, " Is your

lord within?"—"Why, if he is," replied the man, "what would *you* have to say to him?"

An older and graver servant stepped forward, "Who do you want, young man? This is not a time when, if Count Volgeth was at home, you could send in a petition: the old Count, his father, is just dead; and he'll hear no petitions at all for some days to come. However, if you will leave your name with me, and call a week hence, at the Count's house, at Vienna, I'll see what I can do for you. Bring your name to-morrow: here are people within that are waiting for me."—So saying, he went within the court yard, the gates of which were shut, and I remained, thunderstruck, and almost deprived of my senses, without."

"It is all over, then," said I—"my father is gone, for ever! Volgeth, the measure of thy crimes is full! And I, wretched and dastardly as I am, do not dare to meet this parricide, this destroyer!

Nay,

Nay, I dare not even solicit, humbly solicit him, for leave to behold, once more, the author of my being, my first, best friend, whose latter days were rendered so bitter. Yet why not? What can he do, were I at this moment to force myself into his presence? What can he do? Alas! he can tear me from Gertrude: and shall I expose her to the evils that may then befall her?"

The idea of that adored creature recalled my astonished senses. Her voice would appease the agony of my heart; in her bosom I could shed tears; and the throbbings of my temples would cease. I flew, therefore, wildly back, unconscious that I ran like one pursued, and arrived breathless and pale at the lodging where we lived. Gertrude, already alarmed at my unusual absence, was still more terrified at the condition in which I appeared, and the exclamations of rage and grief that I incoherently uttered: and it was some time before I was collected enough to explain to her the

cause of my anguish and affliction. Her tears then recalled me to some degree of reflection. The violence of my rage and indignation gave way to grief of a gentler kind; and I became, after some time, tranquil enough to hear the mild reasoning of Gertrude. "While," said she, "your father lived, while it could soothe him, or gratify your sense of duty and affection, you know, my dear friend, that I was far from opposing your hazarding much to see him; for, dear as your safety is to me, I would not purchase it at the price of your peace of mind. But will it, Leopold, now benefit your father, if you plunge into that danger you so lately, and with so much difficulty, escaped from? Ask yourself what it is probable would have been your father's wishes, could he have communicated those wishes to you? Do you not know that your safety would have been the first wish of his heart? Preserve yourself, then, my Leopold, to cherish his memory, and for your Gertrude,

trude, who reckons on no other friend but you."

However headlong and violent I was, it was hardly possible to resist the voice of reason, united to affection; nor did I, when I looked at the angel countenance of my wife, think I should be justified in hazarding any thing that might tear me from her, and leave her unprotected. To her persuasions, therefore, I yielded; but from one last gratification of filial affection, I would not be dissuaded. I determined to wrap myself up in a mourner's cloak, and be present at the melancholy office of depositing the remains of my father in the burial-place which I understood Volgeth had provided near the habitation where he expired. Gertrude would not endeavour to prevent me from indulging my melancholy and regret; yet she trembled lest I should be so much affected by such a scene as to betray myself: and, at length, her tender entreaties prevailed. I allowed her, in a disguise of mourning,

which could not fail effectually to conceal her, to go with me; and only her having done so could have brought me, undiscovered, from such a scene. Volgeth did not himself attend, which was, perhaps, fortunate for me, for the sight of him would probably have overcome my resolutions of forbearance, even though Gertrude's arm was clasped in mine.

I had thus bade an eternal adieu to the last sad relics of my father; my mind returned to the contemplation of that period of my life when his whole of happiness seemed to depend on me; and the remembrance that I had never once wilfully given him pain, the recollection of those instances when I had sacrificed my own wishes to his repose, now were the only thoughts that were soothing to my mind. It was only in my preference for Gertrude that I had once counteracted his inclinations; and the event had proved that the conduct of his eldest son would have been, equally atrocious, had I, at that

that period, attached myself to her unhappy friend. All prospect of fortune appeared, however, to have vanished for ever; yet, to a younger brother's provision, and some part of my mother's property, I had a legal claim; and though I had no doubt but that my father's will was destroyed, and the money he had saved for me taken by my brother, there appeared something dastardly in itself, and unjust to Gertrude, in giving up these claims. Could I have met Count Volgeth, as man to man, I should not have hesitated a moment; but in that way I knew the attempt to meet him was hopeless. He was armed with power, which he would exert to crush me; and he had certainly taken precautions as would prevent my injuries from being believed, or even heard.

One expedient, however, occurred to me; and I determined to execute it before my departure for England. This was, by means of Graff, whom alone I could trust, to employ a lawyer, who

would enter a protest on my behalf. Such a man, in an humble rank in his profession, I found, but not without difficulty; and having given Graff, to be paid him as the price of these services, a third of all that Gertrude and I possessed in the world, we began our pilgrimage towards England—the asylum of the unfortunate, the arbitress of nations, the seat of the liberal arts, and the chosen throne of liberty herself! With such ideas to inspire hope, and Gertrude irrevocably mine—Gertrude! who every day became more dear to me, my journey began. We travelled in the cheapest way possible; but far from finding any mortification in this necessity, it was productive of many pleasures—pleasures that were diminished only by the remembrance of my father's loss, and the cruelty of my brother. The Rhine carried us, on its varied and romantic bosom, a great part of our way. From thence we passed, almost entirely by water, into Holland, and landed at Harwich,

Harwich, after a short and favourable passage. As we had a great part of England to cross before we reached the abode of Mr. Leicester, it was necessary for us to remain in London a few days. Gertrude knew some persons there whom she thought her friends, others that were her relations. These she was desirous of seeing, as well as of apprizing her father of her return, in a situation considerably different from that he expected to see her in. We therefore took a small lodging, on a second floor, in a street leading from the Strand to the Thames; and though it was not very commodious, we had determined to limit our expences, and to live as cheaply as we could, while we waited answers to our letters in the capital of the British empire.

After Gertrude had a little recovered the effects of the sea-voyage, and the fatigue of the latter part of her journey, I perceived that her spirits were affected by the uncertainty she was in as to the reception she should meet with from her own family :
while

while this was a distant event, it had pressed less on her mind. Now she recalled the circumstance of her mother-in-law's temper, and remembered, that while she concealed her real disposition from the world, and even kept decent terms with them, that her sister and herself were always evidently considered as incumbrances; and the eager desire of the second, Mrs. Leicester, to disburthen her husband of the children of his first marriage, had been the principal inducement to his having given his eldest daughter, at a very early age, to a man who had no other recommendation than the probability of an affluent fortune. Towards her sister, with whom she had been united in the tenderest friendship, Gertrude now anxiously looked; but, on sending a letter to the former town residence of Mrs. Wardenell, this beloved sister, Gertrude had the mortification of hearing, that the house had been given up by its former residents many months before; and that nothing was known

known of their present abode. Gertrude, on receiving this intelligence, expressed more concern than I thought such a circumstance ought to excite. "You will easily," said I, "hear of her among your mutual friends; a change of residence is so common, and may be so many ways accounted for, that I cannot conceive why you should, my dear love, make yourself thus uneasy at it." Gertrude, who had, till then, never spoken on the subject, replied by giving me a slight drawing of the character of her brother-in-law; and added, that, from many circumstances that had occurred before she left England, she was very apprehensive his affairs were embarrassed, and that he was gone with his family abroad. I agreed with her, that, from what I now learned, this was but too probable: yet I besought her not to anticipate evil, but to tranquillize her spirits till she could see an old friend of her mother's, who was, she found, at her house in town, and who had, by a very long and elaborately civil card,

card, informed her, in answer to her enquiries, that she should be at home the next day.

As this was a woman who, on account of the sudden elevation of her family, was now considered as a person of rank, Gertrude, who remembered all the etiquette which those whom the French call *des parvenues*, so tenaciously adhere to, was carried thither in a sedan chair; an hackney-coach being, as she informed me, a vehicle which could, by no means, be suffered before the door of Mrs. Bracey.

My wife, who was not long absent, returned on foot. I met her at the door, and saw that she was pale, and that she trembled. As I led her up stairs, I gently chid her for having fatigued herself; for to fatigue I imputed these symptoms. She replied not, till in our little room, she threw herself into a chair, and a shower of tears fell from her eyes, while she said, "Ah! my dear friend, it is not from walking I suffer; and œconomy to us is so necessary,

necessary, that I should not murmur if I did : but I find myself here in a world for which I am less calculated than ever ; and I already doubt whether we ought not to have remained in an humble rank in your native country, rather than have braved the contempt which our situation may expose us to in mine."—She then gave me an account of her reception by Mrs. Bracegirdle, her mother's most intimate friend, and one who, during her infancy and early youth, had professed for her the liveliest affection.

It would take too much time were I to repeat Gertrude's little history of the interview ; nor could I indeed do it justice. I understood, however, that the lady, who was then alone, received her with smiles and courtesy, congratulated her upon her marriage with a young man of family and fortune, and, being always very full of herself and the particular set of people she lived among, began to talk of them in her usual way, a way ostentatious from its affectation

tion of humility, and it was some time before Gertrude could obtain an opportunity of asking after her family. At these questions, when she at length found occasion to ask them, Mrs. Bracey expressed great astonishment. It was wonderful, that lady observed, she should be ignorant of the situation of her sister, considering how public it had been, and, affecting great commiseration, informed her, that Mr. Wardenell, the husband of that sister, had, some time since, been utterly undone; that his estate and effects having been sold, he was gone, no one knew whither. His wife and children, after remaining a little time among their relations, had disappeared also, and Mrs. Bracey knew not where even the traces of them could be found.

Gertrude, hardly able to speak, from the acute pain this account inflicted on her, ventured tremulously to ask if her father had not, in this exigence, received her unhappy sister?

“Your

"Your father!" cried Mrs. Bracey; "why, child, what do you suppose he could do, poor man? I know but little of him myself, certainly, of late; but I think they told me that, from——upon my word I have forgotten what losses, he was so unlikely to do your sister any great service, that he had little left for himself, but the small portion of his wife—I mean his last wife; so that you——"

At that moment a violent thundering at the door announced visitors—they were titled dowagers, or the wives of some flourishing men in office, who, being elevated to a situation which it was extremely unlikely, in the former part of their lives, that they should ever have filled, had taken up all the state of women of high rank. Four or five coaches followed in succession, and added certain literary ladies, or *soi disant* tel, to the august personages before assembled. Gertrude felt herself entirely forgotten; and, after a few moments, rose to take leave; but Mrs. Bracey was so occupied

pied by her more important visitors, that she hardly attended to her, and slightly nodding, said, "Good bye, my dear; excuse me if I forget your new name; I wish you a pleasant journey."

Such is the outline of the account Gertrude gave me of her reception with this "*dear old friend*" of her mother's. I saw that, with that admirable and mild fortitude which had so much charmed me in other scenes, she now endeavoured, if she could not conquer, to conceal from me, the pain she felt from this disappointment; and, as far as related to Mrs. Bracey, contempt blunted her resentment; but when she reflected on the cruel intelligence relative to her father and her sister, thus unfeelingly communicated, the hope that the evil might be exaggerated did but little appease her uneasiness. No answer arrived from Mr. Leicester; we imagined he was removed from his family-house; while our finances were so much reduced, and London was so extremely expensive, that,

that, if our stay should be prolonged, we were likely to be distressed equally to remain or to remove. Gertrude, perfectly aware of this, collected her thoughts, and determined, since no letter still arrived from her father, to seek some of those with whom he was formerly connected, in hopes of more cheering intelligence. Stranger as I was in this country, I could not be insensible of our situation; and my uneasiness was the more acute, because the very circumstance of my being a foreigner rendered me less able to judge what ought to be done, and, in many instances, less eligible to assist the exertions of my angelic girl.

There was, as Gertrude informed me, an old merchant in the city, who was, when she left England, supposed to be one of the richest of its inhabitants. Mr. Leicester had been the friend of his early youth, and had, at that period, an opportunity of doing him a service which laid the foundation of his subsequent prosperity.

rity. To him Gertrude resolved to make application, believing that she might, at least, obtain information of her father's present situation, on which she might rely. Having waited on this morning, also, till the post had passed, without receiving any answer to what she had written, now a week before, she set out on this forlorn hope. I know no situation so irksome, not to say intolerable, as being left, especially when the mind is ill at ease, in the dreary rooms of an inn, or of a lodging such as we now inhabited. The hum of business, or the echo of mirth, is alike odious to him who cannot be busy, and hears, in merriment, something like an insult to his misery. When I had, from my two pair of stairs window, watched Gertrude to the end of the street, I had nothing to do till her return, but to traverse our two gloomy rooms, and review the circumstances of the two last years of my life. Occupied thus mournfully, I cast my eyes on a paper, which some former

mer lodger in these apartments had left in a drawer under the glass. I saw it was written upon, and that the writing was in verse. The verses were of that melancholy cast so congenial to the feelings with which I was, at that moment, influenced; and my own anxiety was beguiled while I transcribed them from the mutilated paper, on which they were hardly legible.

When Gertrude returned, I saw that her inquietude was not appeased: her old city friend had received her with great coldness; affected hardly to recollect her; and, when she made herself known, insinuated that he had so great a dislike to foreigners of every description, that he could not help being sorry to hear that his *former* friend's daughter was married to one. He then began a story about she hardly knew what, which, however, was meant to depreciate every man not born in England; and before he came to the liberal inference which he seemed to intend

tend to draw, some person desired to speak to him, and he abruptly bade her a good morning, hardly staying till he had answered the only question she was now disposed to ask, as to her father's residence. "He lives where he did, I suppose," said he; "at least, I have not heard to the contrary."

Gertrude having finished this detail, I endeavoured to re-assure her, as well as I could. "Well, we will go to your father," said I; "I feel a reliance on his affection for you, and, in regard to myself, I hope to convince him, that whatever change fortune may have made in my circumstances, I have an heart not wholly unworthy of my Gertrude's love, and a spirit as independent as his own." Gertrude still drooped. "Be not discouraged, my love," continued I; "we have youth, and health, and affection. We shall be together wheresoever destiny may throw us; and that circumstance ensures to us, at least it does to me, a certain degree

degree of happiness, which no other can deprive me of. Ah! dearest girl, how many are there who have no tender affections when their heart rests secure—none who either share or sweeten their sorrows! See,” (and I gave the paper I had found,) “here is a melancholy proof of it.”

“Alas! Leopold,” replied she, the tears rising into her eyes as she spoke, “That there is variety of misery I know but too well; but the calamity of others cannot, surely, mitigate ours.”—She then cast her eyes on the paper. I saw her countenance change the moment she looked steadily at the hand. “Gracious Heaven!” exclaimed she, “this is the writing of my sister!” Then hastily perusing the contents, she became still more affected, and said, “It is her writing, I am sure of it. I know that she occasionally wrote poetry, though she hardly ever showed it, even to me. Nor is it difficult for me to account for her
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feeling and uttering expressions like these." I endeavoured, since I saw these conjectures gave my wife so much pain, to persuade her they might be unfounded; but she told me she was very sure of what she asserted: "Nor is it," said she, "difficult to account for finding them here. This house was, when I went abroad with our poor Ulrica, inhabited by a man who had married an old servant of my mother, and who endeavoured, by entering into the coal-trade, and letting his house in apartments, to obtain a living. My sister, just before I quitted England, had gone to Italy with her husband. The embarrassments Mr. Wardenell had fallen into were increased by that expedition. Very soon after their return they quitted their house in town; and it is but too probable, that when she was afterwards compelled to reside there, in the hope of settling the affairs, she resorted hither. From what I collected in my late enquiries, there can be no doubt that all this is

too

too true. Alas ! Leonora, where are you now ?—where shall I seek you ?”

All my endeavours to dispel the uneasiness this incident had created in the bosom of my wife, were, I could perceive, vain : yet not to increase mine, she endeavoured to appear calm.

A few hours after Gertrude's return, I received information, from a quarter to which I had before had recourse, that Altdorf, which was the name now borne by my second brother, was still in England, where he held some post in the diplomatic line, but, in fact, was more a man of pleasure than of business, and troubled himself very little about any thing else but his own amusement and gratification. I did not believe his enmity to me had ever been so great as Volgeth's, and I hoped he might feel some compunction, as well as compassion, when my father's death and my situation were known to him. I wrote to him, therefore, in a style which, it appeared to me, one brother

had a right to use towards another. I obtained no answer. I wrote a second, and a third time, by means of a German musician, who had access to him. He could not then refuse an answer. It was, however, verbal only, and imported, that Count Altdorf knew no such person, and desired he might be troubled with his letters no more.

Thus repulsed, the composer, whose bread, he told me, depended on the favour of the great, desired to decline any farther interposition; and I determined to go to Altdorf myself; but I found this intention so very alarming to Gertrude, and her uneasiness on many other accounts was so acute, that it was risking health more precious than my own life, to persist in this resolution, or, at least, to execute it, till Gertrude was less wretched about her father and her sister, of neither of whom we had yet received any intelligence. It was therefore I took the resolution to use what little money remained,

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in conveying Gertrude into the country, where I hoped her father would receive her, and I imagined I could leave her in his protection while I returned to settle certain points with Altdorf, and to speak to him in a different tone from that which I had hitherto used. We proceeded, then, in the cheapest way we could devise, to the market-town, about sixty miles from London. On arriving there no other conveyance offered but a post-chaise, to carry us from the inn to his house. Gertrude enquired after her father. She was answered, that he was living, but they knew nothing more of him, as he had little communication at that place.

With sensations such as perhaps none can imagine but who have been circumstanced nearly as we were, we approached the house. The arrival of visitors seemed, by the lights we saw moving about it, to be an extraordinary circumstance. Gertrude enquired for the servants whom she had left there, that one of them might an-

nounce her to her father ; but, except the manager of his farm, a fullen clown, there was not one of them remaining. This man seemed to be without any ideas but of his business ; and conceiving, as I easily perceived, that, as I was not an Englishman, I must be a Frenchman, he very rudely said, he would let his master know that Miss Gatty, as was, wanted to speak to him ; but he could not make any thing of outlandish names. I felt Gertrude tremble as she held my arm ; and, believing it best to shorten a scene so distressing to my wife, I followed with her the man who went to announce us.

Mr. Leicester was sitting in a great chair, his feet and hands wrapped up in flannel. His wife and three girls were in the room. They appeared to be much more surprised than pleased when Gertrude, approaching, knelt to her father, and burst into tears. She named me—but could add nothing. A slight degree of affection, but it was momentary, appeared

peared to move the old man. He tried to shake it off, and seemed afraid of betraying any marks of kindness to the child of his first wife, while under the scrutinizing eyes of his second. He welcomed us, however; but it was assuredly a very different welcome from that which we should have received, had I been still the favourite and affluent son of Count Sommervelt, to whose marriage with his daughter Mr. Leicester had so readily consented. We had an apartment allotted to us; but many hours of the second day had not passed, before intimations were given, by the elder Miss Leicester, that this accommodation could only be temporary, for that her cousin was coming to stay some months with her mamma, and that room was always reserved for her. Gertrude had soon afterwards an opportunity of conversing alone with her father; and, with the most poignant concern, learned that her unfortunate sister, who, at a very early period of life, had married according to her fa-

ther's wishes rather than her own, had been so reduced, with her infant-family, by the misconduct of her husband, that, after having undergone very great difficulties and distresses, she was now gone to Ireland, on the promise of receiving assistance from some of his relations, who resided in that country. All that her father had been able to do for her, was to undertake to provide, during her absence, for two of her children, who were too young to accompany her in her sad expatriation. Mr. Leicester, who seemed, as Gertrude thought, to have more feeling for the daughters of his first marriage than he ventured to shew, assured her, that in doing thus much, he had exceeded the bounds of prudence ; for that his affairs had long been in an embarrassed state, and his infirmities confined him so frequently to his room, that his farming, on the success of which a considerable part of his income had formerly arisen, had failed of bringing him the supplies it formerly did.

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He gave Gertrude thus to understand, that it was but little in his power to give us any permanent or considerable assistance; and enquired of her what it was my purpose to do? at the same time intimating, that, after the change of my circumstances, she had done exceedingly wrong not to consult him; and that the three hundred pounds he had sent her, that she might appear properly as the wife of a man of fortune, were never intended to enable her to unite herself to a man without any.

Gertrude then acquired courage to relate the history of my misfortunes and hers. The narrative did not fail of making some impression; but Mr. Leicester endeavoured to avoid shewing that he felt it. He is a man who, possessing early in life a considerable property, having had then high health and a great flow of animal spirits, had lived a very thoughtless life, and dissipated a considerable part of his fortune, till he was three or four and thirty.

He then became acquainted with a young woman, mother of Gertrude, and her eldest sister. She had only a small fortune of about a thousand pounds; but her uncommon beauty of person, added to many other good qualities, induced Mr. Leicester to overlook the disadvantages of his taking an almost portionless wife, to repair the diminution which his gaiety had made in his own fortune. The felicity he enjoyed with her, during the few years they lived together, made him more than amends. But, unhappily for him and his children, he lost her at the end of four years. His plan of domestic happiness was broken; his children were yet infants; and the place where he had lived with and lost their mother, became insupportable to him. Thrown once more back on the world, his former habits returned upon him with greater inveteracy; and his pecuniary affairs soon became so much disordered, that nothing could retrieve them but marrying some woman
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of fortune. Such a one was easily found by a man of his appearance; for he had then a very handsome person. Mr. Leicester married. His fortune was, in a certain degree, retrieved; but his happiness was not to be regained. By degrees he learned to content himself with ease; and he found that could no otherwise be purchased than by a general submission to his wife, who brought him a son and four daughters. This woman, who had no feeling but for herself and her children, had made their father's house very uncomfortable to Gertrude. Leonora, the eldest of his daughters by his first wife, was married at a very early age; and as the youngest was alone in the way of her mother-in-law, that good lady had promoted her travelling with the daughter of Baron Ebendorf, with whom she accidentally became acquainted. When there was a probability of her marrying an Hungarian, which Mrs. Leicester thought was an absolute security that she should never see her

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again,

again, she had assisted with her savings in sending the money for her equipment.

More unhappily for the daughters than their step-mother, both these schemes had, in a great degree, failed. The husband of Leonora was impoverished and undone; and Gertrude now returned, married, indeed, to an Hungarian, but one who could, under his present circumstances, be considered only as one of those emigrants with whom the revolutions of the continent have crowded the British islands. Such a disappointment, therefore, could not fail to embitter the spirit of Mrs. Leicester towards Gertrude; and the more so, because she saw that her husband, however compelled to stifle the appearance of it, was unable, wholly, to conquer his affection for the children of a woman he had adored.

The poor man evidently suffered severely in the contention between his desire of peace and the natural tenderness that lingered in his heart. The looks
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and voice of Gertrude might have charmed a savage of the desert with humanity. Her father could not resist her; and he told her, not without some symptoms of confusion and shame, that though he could not, longer than a few days, give us apartments in his house, he would do every thing he could to make our little menage comfortable, if we would reside at a small, but not unpleasant house of his, within three miles; and he would supply us, from his farm, and assist us till better prospects arose for me. He bade his daughter conceal, as much as without falsehood she could, the most discouraging circumstances of our history, and particularly that we were nearly without money, a want which, he said, he would endeavour clandestinely to supply.

To this cottage, then, we most readily repaired, though Mrs. Leicester had done every thing to prevent, without absolutely refusing to consent to it. Gertrude, whose affection for her sister was second only to

that which she felt for me, took the two infant children of Leonora under her own care. I saw, every day, new cause to love and to admire her. These phrases, indeed, do but very faintly express what I felt for her; and we should, in an humble cottage, have tasted felicity which might well have been the envy of palaces, if I could have borne to have led a life of listless dependance, and if I had not seen the content of Gertrude destroyed by the conviction that her father's quiet was disturbed by the murmurs of his wife, who thought he did too much for us, and teased him with remonstrances and reproaches.

After an interval, therefore, of comparative tranquillity, which lasted only about a month, I resolved, since my wife was now in a place of safety, and protected by her father, to return, and attempt to make some impression on Altdorf. Gertrude, however averse to our parting, felt that I ought not to give up my rights
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without another effort to assert them. The characters of Volgeth and Altdorf were so essentially different, that it was still possible, notwithstanding what had passed, that Altdorf might be made to attend to me if I could see him, and that I might still find, in the gay libertine, what the cold-hearted politician denied me. Gertrude would not suffer either her fears or her affection to embitter to me this necessary, but, as we hoped, temporary separation. She gave me a few trinkets, which had been left at her paternal house, to raise money in case of emergency. I took them with extreme reluctance; yet it was better than taking money from her father; and, with an oppressed heart, (for this was our first separation since our marriage,) I set out for London.

I now determined to address myself in another manner to Altdorf, by interesting some Englishman of rank, who, being acquainted with my brother, might speak

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to him on my behalf. I hoped that such a measure might pique his national, as well as his family pride.

But I found some difficulty in obtaining admission to these gentlemen; and still more to prevail on them to attend to my story. Occupied with their own pursuits and pleasures, many of them found it too laborious to read over a long memoir; and I could not shorten mine. They supposed that I had taken, in regard to the politics of my country and of Europe, a part that was displeasing to the government I was subject to, and inimical to the interest of my family, and that I was now paying, for some time, as an emigrant and an exile, the price of my indiscreet dissent, or wrong-headed interference. One of them, however, advised me to apply to certain men in place; but with them I fared still worse. They received me when, after much delay, I was admitted to see them, with a degree of cold and supercilious insolence which I found
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it extremely difficult not to resent on the spot. Disgusted and, indeed, irritated, till my very moderate share of prudence forsook me, I forced myself into my brother's presence. His reception of me was so unfeeling and unnatural, that, no longer able to command myself, I reproached him in the bitterest terms, while the contemptuous air he assumed irritated me almost to phrenzy. For a moment I lost sight of every thing but the desire of vengeance; I recollected all the unmerited injuries I had received from those who ought to have been my best friends; their offences against my father were present to me in all its atrocity; and the expressions this cruel remembrance made me utter were at length so severe, that they reached the heart of Altdorf, enveloped as it was in the apathy of luxury and prosperity; but, far from softening it to affection, it became inflamed with resentment. His servants were called to turn me down stairs; two of them suffered for their teme-

temerity in daring to touch me. I fiercely bade their master prepare for another sort of summons the next day; and telling him I no longer considered him as any thing but a scoundrel, whom it was almost beneath me to punish, I protested I would expose his brutal and unnatural conduct; and throwing him a card, on which was written my name, and the name of the street where I lodged, I rushed out of the house.

Arrived at my lodgings, which were the same as I had inhabited with Gertrude, I felt all the horrors of my situation, and that to which I had brought her, to whom, for merit, in my opinion, a throne would have been unequal. However ill I had before had reason to think of Altdorf, I could not believe, till since experience had fatally convinced me, that he was so totally destitute of all those feelings which ought to be innate in the man, or, at least, acquired by the gentleman. If to a proud and irritable spirit common injuries from
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those with whom he has common intercourse, are difficult to be borne, injuries of such a nature as I had suffered were intolerable. I thought, at that moment, it was easier to die than to continue in an existence so insulted. I breathed with difficulty; my heart seemed on fire; and Gertrude was not by me. Her enchanting voice no longer assuaged the agonies of my spirit; I could not calm the throbbing of my head by reposing it on her bosom. Reflection, if such confused thoughts as passed through my mind could be called so, served only to add to my tortures. I ran out, and wandered wildly about the streets, sat down in a coffee-house, and began a letter to Altdorf—tore it, and resolved again to seek him, and compel him to meet me with arms. For this purpose I returned to my lodging, took a pair of pistols I had there, and was proceeding towards the splendid house inhabited by my brother, when I was met by three men, one of whom stopped me, and told

told me, in German, that he was the servant of Count Altdorf. I asked what was his business with me? He spoke to the two others, one of whom, coming close to me, delivered me an order from the Secretary of State, issued under the alien act, and importing that I must remain in custody of the bearer till my departure from England, which must be within the space of four and twenty hours.

I knew not that such an act existed, and conceiving from my ignorance of the present laws of England, that in that country such an arrest was procured by the influence and artifices of Altdorf, I attempted expostulation, and even resistance; but it was very bootless; I was soon overpowered; and my captors, to avoid the remarks of the croud, put me into a hackney-coach, and I was carried to the house of the messenger, where I was put into a sort of confinement, and should have been treated with more civility could I have better commanded the expressions of indignation which

which such proceedings on the part of my brother extorted from me.

But what were my reflections when I was left alone ! I was to be violently torn from my wife—from the only being dear to me on earth ! and I was tempted to dash myself to pieces from the window, when I found that there would not be time to write to her, and receive her answer, before I should be carried to Harwich, and sent on board a vessel for Hamburgh. This overwhelming apprehension humbled me more than could any consideration that related merely to myself. I put a force on myself, and endeavoured to prevail on the person in whose custody I was, to grant me time at least to see my wife. It was not, he said, in his power to make the least alteration in the orders he acted under ; they were peremptory, and without appeal. I snatched up a pen and wrote to Gertrude ; it was with difficulty I made the words legible ; and, indeed, I must pass briefly over a period of such acute
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and indescribable anguish as language would fail in representing. Though Gertrude had insisted on my taking all we had, the little sum was already nearly exhausted. My present abode was expensive; I had not a guinea; and even if time allowed Gertrude to reach London before my departure, I was sure she had not the pecuniary means of coming, and I doubted extremely whether her father would supply her. Eighteen hours only remained, and of these eight would be passed in sleep by those who surrounded me: *they* were tranquil; *my* despair, my agonies, disturbed not these men, accustomed to such scenes; for I had two of the Bow-street officers placed in the room with me, as if I had been a felon. They slept, but for me to sleep was impossible. I passed that miserable night in traversing the room I was confined in, sometimes calling frantically on Gertrude, and at others cursing my existence, and the hour that gave me birth. I now resolved that no
force

force should compel me to leave the country till I had seen my wife; now doubted whether I ought to wish to involve her yet deeper in my miseries, and hazard her health, so precious to me, by such a parting. But if I could, by any means, protract my stay till she could reach me, was it not possible I could take her with me? Yet ought I to desire it, destitute as I was of the means of supporting her in any country? In revolving such thoughts, each loaded with sensations of the bitterest anguish that can tear the human heart, passed the long, long night. The morning came, and with its dawn my journey was to begin. By that time despair had almost exhausted my bodily strength; and I thought it impossible that I could live and retain my senses to the end of my journey. To my sufferings, however evident, my keepers appeared to be totally insensible: they seemed, indeed, to be incapable of comprehending my feelings, because

because they had none of their own resembling them. At my departure no money was asked of me; but I was placed in a post-chaise, between the messenger and a thief-taker, as if I had been a criminal. I was hardly sensible, however, of any outward circumstance. I was going from Gertrude never to see her more; and that idea absorbed every other, and almost annihilated every feeling but that of rage and revenge, when I thought on the inhuman and cowardly authors of my misfortunes.

I do not know in what light I was represented at the places where my jailers stopped for refreshment; but I believe it was as an enemy to the British government. The greatest care was taken to prevent my escape: travelling post, the journey was soon performed. When we got to Harwich, the wind was high and contrary, and my principal conductor informed me that there was no probability that the vessel I was to go in could put
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to sea till the next day. Deprived now of all hope of bidding Gertrude adieu, this seemed an aggravation of my despair; for had I been allowed to pass this interval in London, there would, I thought, have been a chance of my beholding her once more. Now, in addition to that cruel deprivation, I had to dread lest she should undergo all the fatigue of a journey thither, only to hear that the ocean was between us, and to be confirmed in her apprehensions of never seeing me more.

The night passed as the former had done: sleepless, and most wretched, I watched the first light of that morning which was to see me separated by the sea from my last and dearest hope. I was allowed to walk, attended by my keepers, towards the place of embarkation, though there was yet no likelihood of our embarking. The wind was still adverse, and the water so turbulent that the fishing vessels returned to harbour. This seemed but a prolongation of misery. The evening again came on; I was now rather in the

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gloom than in the rage of despair ; and the men, believing me better reconciled to my lot, suffered me, with only one of them, to walk about the town. This was a relief to me, because I was unable to rest ; and I took my way along the turnpike-road that leads towards London.

It was almost dusk ; I noticed not the carriages that passed us ; I neither heard nor saw them, but walked on, I knew not why, with a degree of speed which at length gave some disquiet to my keeper—he spoke to me—I heeded him not. He took my arm with more roughness than I was disposed to submit to, when my resentment was suspended by hearing a piercing shriek, issuing from a post-chaise which at that moment approached. Gertrude threw herself out of it, and was, in a moment, in my arms.

You will not expect a minute relation of such a meeting : it made some impression even on the heart of a police-officer, and he allowed us to get into the chaise

without his accompanying us, on condition that the driver should proceed only a foot pace, and that he should walk on one side. In this order we arrived at the inn, which was, for the present, my prison, but which I would not now have exchanged for a palace where Gertrude was not.

As soon as we were able to converse, my angelic girl told me that the moment she had received the incoherent letter I had written from the house of the messenger, she determined, at all events, to set out; and feeling how necessary it was to procure a supply of money for me in such a situation, she had implored the assistance of her father, who, not without renewing his remarks on the excessive imprudence of my conduct, and lamenting a connection so unfortunate, protested that it was not, by any means, in his power to afford her, at that time, the sum she had occasion for. "I had reason, however," said Gertrude, "to suppose that this was not so strictly

the case but that he could have done it, had he not dreaded the opposition of Mrs. Leicester, of whom my poor father lived in an almost abject degree of awe.

"I summoned the resolution our condition required, and applied, without much preface, to this mercenary woman. She made many difficulties, and I found was not to be prevailed upon by any motives of humanity or compassion. Nothing remained but an application to her avarice; and I offered, on condition of her allowing me to have this money (it was only fifty pounds I asked of her,) to make over, and engage you to make over to her son, my interest in a small farm, which belonged half to my sister and me, and the other half is at my father's disposal at his death. My poor sister had, I found, already given up hers to the necessities of her husband. Of the moiety that remained at my father's disposal, Mrs. Leicester had assured herself. My fourth part, therefore, was all that she now wanted
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to secure the entire possession of this small property to her son. Circumstanced as I was, it was not for me to hesitate: I gave Mrs. Leicester the conditional engagement she required, and she then produced fifty pounds, which was, she declared, all she could at that time command. She knew there was no time for me to wait while she obtained a sum more adequate to the sacrifice I had agreed to make, and the necessity which had compelled me to make it. I set out post, my Leopold, and travelled night and day. Missing you in London, I followed you hither; and now I no longer feel either fatigue or disappointment, too happy to share your destiny, whatsoever that may be."

Thus spoke this lovely, this incomparable woman; and I thought myself, wandering persecuted exile as I was, the most blessed of mankind; for what has life to give equal to the happiness of possessing the tender and faithful attachment of such

a creature? She had been six hours with me, and we had talked over our future prospects, Gertrude trying to inspire me with hope, and I, on my part, stifling that just indignation against my unnatural brother which still ulcerated my heart, when the keepers, who always remained in the next room, came in to inform me that the wind having suddenly shifted, the sloop in which I was to embark was getting under weigh, and that I must immediately go on board. I turned to Gertrude, and desired her to make the best use, for her own accommodation, of the few moments that remained. Judge of what I suffered when Janton, the messenger, informed me that the lady having no passport, could not be permitted to go with me; "but were it," said he, "otherwise, I have here," and he took a paper from his pocket, "a positive order to suffer no person whatever to accompany you."

No—I should vainly attempt to convey to another an idea of the state of distraction that

that I then fell into. My phrenzy served only to render my poor girl more wretched; I tried, therefore, to conquer it. She submitted with less apparent anguish; but I saw that the blow fell heavily on her heart. She refused to take more money than barely sufficed to carry her back to the inhospitable neighbourhood of her father. Scarce was a moment allowed us for such arrangements as we could yet make in regard to her intentions of following me as soon as the means and passport could be procured. I was torn, inhumanly torn from her. I was forced into the boat—I saw her stand on the shore when it was rowed away! I still beheld her there when I entered the sloop—my eyes were still fixed on the spot. The wind served but too well—the angel form disappeared in distance! Almighty God! and I have, perhaps, seen her for the last time.

I must hasten to conclude a narrative which, while it tears my heart with agony, has, perhaps, trespassed on your complaisance.

fance. On my arrival at Hamburgh I received an order not to return to England under pain of the severest punishment. I was not even, by the magistrates of Hamburgh, allowed to wait above fifteen days in that town. On the last of those days I received a letter from Gertrude; it informed me that she was not ill received on her return, and should soon be able to send me a supply of money, and, perhaps, to follow it herself; but that Altdorf was himself about to return to Vienna—information which I might depend upon: and she intreated me to write to her, to say where I could with safety receive her, and be myself secure from any of those injuries which Altdorf might have the power to attempt doing me in Germany with as much success as he had done in England.

This letter, and my knowledge of the libertine character of Altdorf, added another to the tortures I already suffered. I imagined that Altdorf had heard of the beauty of my wife, and had formed designs

signs against her of which she was already aware, and dreaded lest, in coming to join me, she should fall into his power. Impressed with this idea, the anguish of my heart became still more intolerable. Compelled to leave Hamburgh, I proceeded towards Hanover, where I had some hopes of finding an Englishman whom I had known in England, and who could, I thought, assist me in obtaining a safe passage for Gertrude; when, in passing on foot, (for no other conveyance was within my reach,) through the great woods of Stenhausen, four leagues from this place, I was accosted by some young men, apparently soldiers. I learned, after a short conversation with them, that they had been driven, by various sorts of oppression and hardship, to carve their fortune for themselves, with very little regard to the honour of their characters. Their fate was desperate; mine was not less so. I forgot every thing at that time but the desire of vengeance, and the dread of losing Gertrude.

trude. I associated myself with these men, but not with any intention ever to assist in, or partake of, any unjust means of acquiring subsistence. I thought I might now find occasion to avenge myself on Altdorf; for I learned that he was certainly coming from England, in consequence of his mission from the Imperial Court being at an end; and I determined, assisted by my associates, to stop him, and compel him to do me justice. In the mean time I wrote, to prevent Gertrude's beginning her journey while there was any probability of her falling in the way of this cruel, vicious man: but such is the uncertainty of letters reaching her, and such I know her courage and fortitude to be when her affection for me urges her to exertion, that I have incessantly watched in the woods where I met you; and, on the sight of an English or of a travelling carriage, have stopped it, merely to ascertain who were within; nor have my comrades once violated the line of conduct I prescribed to them, when,
 asso-

associating myself with them, I related to them my injuries and my sufferings.

Aldorf has hitherto escaped us, and I now doubt whether his journey is not delayed. My apprehensions for the safety of my wife, which sometimes amount even to agony that threatens to deprive me of my senses, is, however, by no means lessened. I believe that if it long continues, I shall become mad. In this state of mind it was that I addressed myself, under very suspicious appearances, to you. The manner, at once spirited and humane, in which you answered such a salutation, inspired me with the hope that I had found an Englishman who possessed all the honourable and generous feelings of his country, such as it was before the events which have aggravated national prejudices, and embittered even the noble and liberal minds of the well educated English. I felt an almost immediate conviction that in you I had *met* a friend.

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You have now my sad history before you: my faults have been great, but my misfortunes surely more bitter than even those faults deserve! Am I, sir, mistaken in the hope I have formed? May I flatter my sick heart with that of having found in you a friend?

Sommerfeldt here ceased to speak. We proceeded together to Hanover immediately; from whence I will write to you as to my intentions of returning very soon to England. Adieu, my dear friend.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.



